

THE FIGHTING  
AT  
JUTLAND

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# THE FIGHTING AT JUTLAND

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# *The* FIGHTING AT JUTLAND

(ABRIDGED EDITION)

The Personal Experiences  
of Forty-five Officers and  
Men of the British Fleet.

. . . . *Edited by* . . . .

H. W. FAWCETT, Royal Navy,

AND

G. W. W. HOOPER, Royal Navy.

With 45 Photographs and Numerous Plans and Illustrations.

ILLUSTRATED BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., Ltd.

1921



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<i>Abridged Edition</i>	...	<i>September, 1921</i>

21-18758 *united*

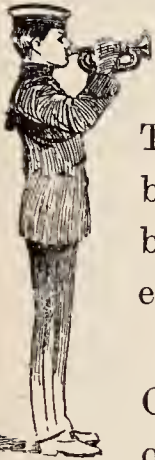
TO THE MEMORY OF  
THOSE WHO GAVE  
THEIR LIVES AT  
JUTLAND, 31<sup>st</sup> MAY  
TO 1<sup>st</sup> JUNE, 1916.







# Introduction.



THE narratives of the Fighting at Jutland which are collected in this book were all written by officers or men who were present at the battle, and they are, therefore, first-hand evidence of the detail events of the fighting.

The book is not a criticism ; it is a record of personal experiences. One has often felt that a great gap would be filled in the histories of old-time naval battles if one could read true stories of all the hundred and one personal incidents of the fighting that must have occurred in the ding-dong days of old. Imagine the adventure that could be contained in a book truly describing the fighting incidents of Trafalgar !. What an insight it would give us into the character and courage of the men who served Nelson. So this book of the Fighting at Jutland is an endeavour to fill a like gap for the one fleet action of the War of 1914-18.

In it all discussion of tactics and of strategy, of whether we won the battle or whether the Germans did, has been omitted, for it has been felt that the desire of all will be, not so much to read of the technicalities of the battle as of the personal experiences of the men who fought. In a personal narrative one can write many impressions of battle incidents and can refer to many details that would be out of place in official reports, so that one hopes this book will form a valuable supplement to the official histories of the action, and at the same time be of live interest to the general public as showing the experiences that men go through in modern Naval fighting.

The accuracy of times and of squadron positions or movements is not guaranteed, but is indeed in some instances sure to be at fault, for it is well known that personal records of naval battles unchecked by ships' logs, official reports, etc., are frequently inaccurate in these details. But perhaps such accuracy can justifiably be dispensed with in a book which

records, not ships' movements, but personal experiences. Similarly, the small diagrams that are added to several narratives do not profess to be accurate in detail, but are included only for the purpose of illustrating the progress of the fighting.

The majority of the narratives were written very shortly after the action, or from notes made during the action; but a few were written in 1920 from memory only. The photographs of ships in action were all taken on 31st May, 1916, and those of damage to ships were taken immediately after the action. The illustrations in the book are drawn by an officer who was himself present at the battle.

In a few instances it has been thought advisable to split up a narrative and to put one part at the beginning of the book and another part later on, but as a rule the narratives are left complete in themselves as a story of one man or one ship's experiences through the action. With this exception, however, that references to certain prominent events of the battle, such as the blowing up of H.M.S. *Defence* which was witnessed by perhaps nearly a hundred ships, have been omitted from some narratives, for the repetition became after a while wearisome without adding to our knowledge of the event. The narratives have been arranged, so far as has been convenient, in the same sequence as that in which the events they describe occurred. There have necessarily been exceptions, and there is overlapping, but, broadly speaking, anyone who reads through the forty-five narratives<sup>1</sup> contained in this book will be reading a history of the events at Jutland in the order in which they occurred. Those editorial comments which have been considered necessary are printed in italics, and the narratives themselves are printed in ordinary type.

For anyone who wishes to refresh his memory of the main events of the action, a brief description of the battle and a chronology of the principal events are contained in Appendices B and C, pages 219-227.

The publication of British and German official despatches in December, 1920, has enabled the main facts and times to be stated with reasonable authority.

We may conclude this introduction by expressing the hope that the book will not be too technical for the ordinary "land-lubber." Most of

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Abridged Edition. There were sixty narratives in the earlier editions.

us know that the bows is the front end of a ship, that port is the left-hand side and starboard the right-hand side, and that on the beam is at right angles to the fore and aft line of the ship. It is not necessary to know much more,

We also hope that the Service itself may benefit by the knowledge contained in this book, and that the Naval Officers of to-morrow who were not yet at sea when Jutland was fought, may to some little extent be inspired by the spirit that runs through these narratives of sea adventure.

We, of course, owe our principal thanks to the authors of the narratives, who, placing their knowledge freely at our disposal, alone made possible the production of this book. Their willingness to assist us in all ways has made a difficult task comparatively easy. Our thanks are also due to the Admiralty for offering no obstacles whatsoever to the publication of these naval experiences.

Let us add that an underlying purpose and perhaps our justification in publishing this book (for none of us are men of letters) seems to us to be expressed in Rudyard Kipling's verse :—

“ Oh, what avails the classic bent,  
And what the cultured word,  
Against the undoctored incident  
That actually occurred.”

H. W. FAWCETT.

G. W. W. HOOPER.



## Preface to Abridged Edition, 1921

---

The first edition of this book, published in April, 1921, contained seventy-two narratives of the action, of which forty-five have been selected for the present edition.

These have been re-arranged and in a few instances shortened, but otherwise no material alterations have been made.

H. W. F.

G. W. W. H.

*July, 1921.*

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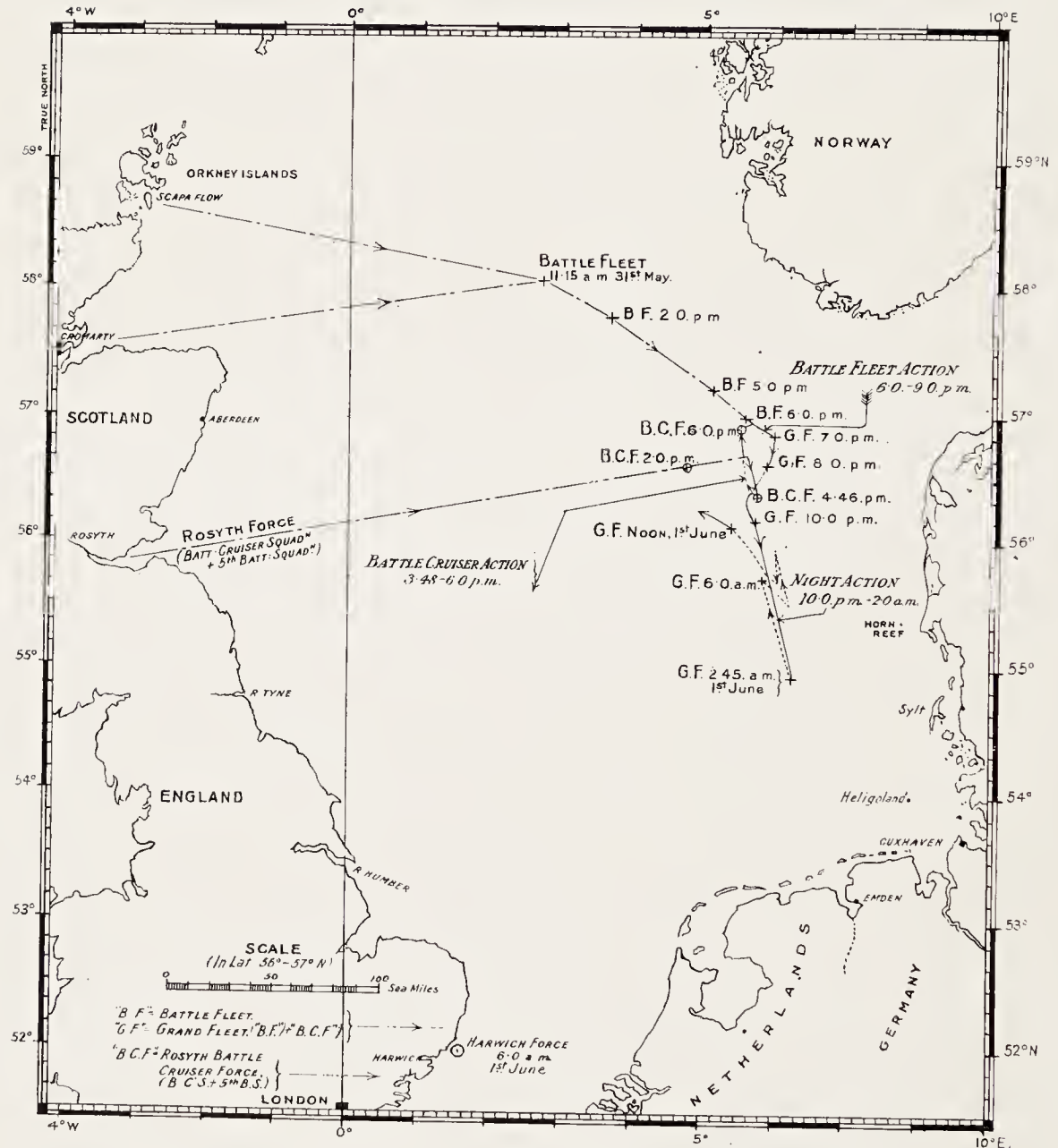
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# NORTH SEA - 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY - 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE, 1916.



# THE ADMIRALTY OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE ACTION.<sup>1</sup>

---

THE Secretary of the Admiralty makes the following announcement :

“ On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 31st, a naval engagement took place off the coast of Jutland.

The British ships on which the brunt of the fighting fell were the Battle Cruiser Fleet and some cruisers and light cruisers supported by four fast battleships. Among those the losses were heavy.

The German Battle Fleet, aided by low visibility, avoided prolonged action with our main forces, and soon after these appeared on the scene the enemy returned to port, though not before receiving severe damage from our battleships.

The battle cruisers *Queen Mary*, *Indefatigable*, *Invincible*, and the cruisers *Defence* and *Black Prince* were sunk. The *Warrior* was disabled, and after being towed for some time had to be abandoned by her crew.

It is also known that the destroyers *Tipperary*, *Turbulent*, *Fortune*, *Sparrowhawk*, and *Ardent* were lost, and six others are not yet accounted for.

No British battleships or light cruisers were sunk.

The enemy's losses were serious.

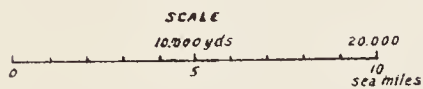
At least one battle cruiser was destroyed, and one severely damaged ; one battleship reported sunk by our destroyers during a night attack ; two light cruisers were disabled and probably sunk.

The exact number of enemy destroyers disposed of during the action cannot be ascertained with any certainty, but it must have been large.”

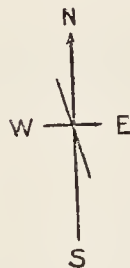
<sup>1</sup> Taken from the “Times” of June 3rd, 1916.

# THE BATTLE CRUISER ACTION

Run to the South 3.48. to 4.46.  
Run to the North 4.46 to 6.0.P.M.

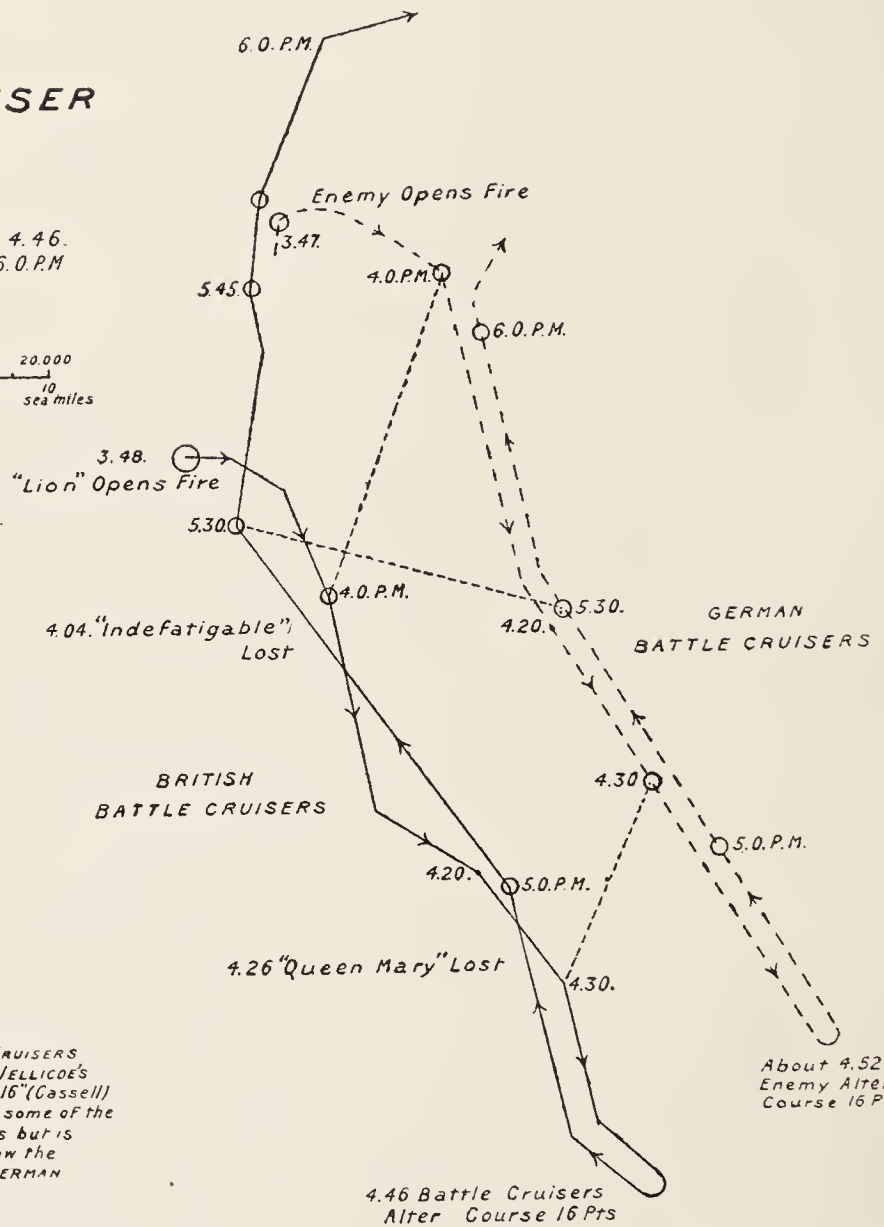


2.15. "Galatea"  
First Sights Enemy



NOTE. The track of our BATTLE CRUISERS is based on the plans in LORD JELlicoe's book "THE GRAND FLEET 1914-16" (Cassell). It is not quite in accord with some of the BATTLE CRUISER NARRATIVES but is sufficiently accurate to show the progress of the battle. The GERMAN track is approximate only.

British Battle Fleet, About 6.0.P.M.



———— British Battle Cruisers.  
----- German Battle Cruisers  
(Approximate Track).

German High Seas Fleet  
About 4.46 P.M.



## *Phase I.*



# THE BATTLE CRUISER ACTION

3.50 p.m. to 5.50 p.m.

COVERING THE PERIOD OF THE FIRST SIGHTING OF THE  
ENEMY AT ABOUT 2.20 P.M.; AND THE FIGHTING OF VICE-  
ADMIRAL BEATTY'S FORCE BETWEEN ABOUT 3.50 AND 5.50 P.M.



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## Chapter I.



# SIGHTING THE ENEMY



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## CHAPTER I.

---

### Narrative of H.M.S. "Galatea"

(Flagship of the First Light Cruiser Squadron, which first Sighted the Enemy).

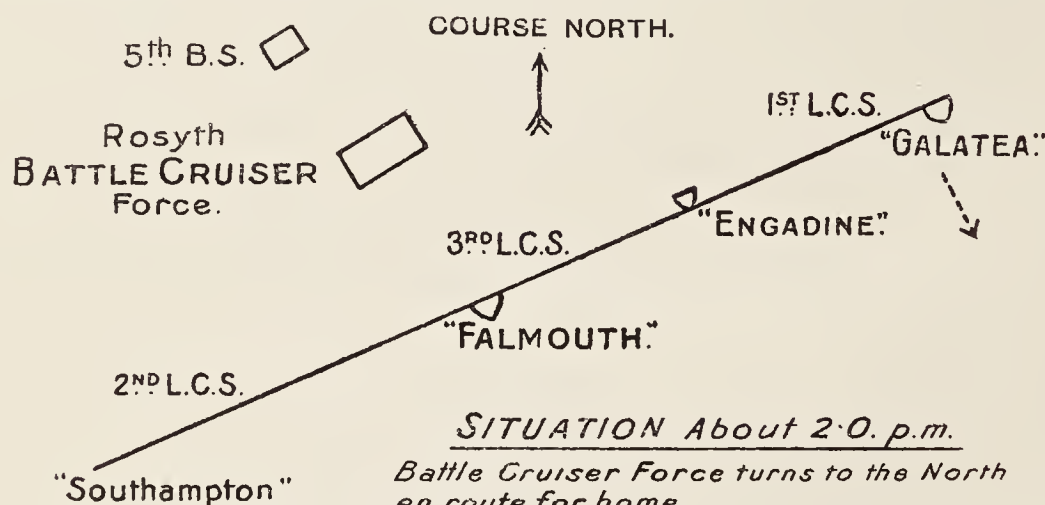
Late on the evening of the 30th May, H.M.S. *Galatea*, flying the broad pennant of Commodore Alexander-Sinclair, of the First Light Cruiser Squadron, with *Phaeton*, *Inconstant*, and *Cordelia* of that Squadron, and in company with the Second and Third Light Cruiser Squadrons and the Battle Cruiser Fleet, sailed from Rosyth for a sweep to the South-east. These sweeps had been carried out so many times before that no one was very excited, though those in the know were aware that the Battle Fleet was leaving Scapa in support of our force, so, apparently, there was some slight possibility of meeting an enemy force. When we were still only a short distance East of the Firth of Forth, at 3.15 a.m., the *Galatea* had a torpedo fired at her, which broke surface just on her bow, and shortly afterwards the track of another torpedo was reported crossing astern of us, but no submarine was sighted, and we continued East during the 31st May without any other excitement.

In the afternoon of the 31st we had neared the Northern fringe of the Heligoland Bight, with its mine-fields, but there were no fresh rumours of German activity. About 2 o'clock the Eastern limit of the sweep was reached, and the signal to turn *en route* for home again was made, and the battle cruisers turned. But *Galatea* on the wing was late in receiving the signal, and about 2.15 was only just about to turn when a merchant ship was sighted ahead, which appeared to be stopped and blowing off steam, so the Commodore held on his course for a few minutes to have a look at her. On approaching her a little closer a destroyer, which had not at first been seen, was observed to leave her side, and at once was noted by her stump foremast and tall mainmast to be unmistakably a Hun. Action stations were at once sounded off.

I was aft on the quarter-deck quietly basking in the sun, and on hearing the bugle was in little hurry as I had heard that we were going to action stations for drill purposes sometime during the afternoon. So I strolled forward to my station—a little home-made Wireless Office on the foc'sle, more like a rabbit hutch than a W/T office, where I coded and decoded signals in action. But just as I went up the ladder on to the foc'sle I was deafened by the report of the foc'sle 6-inch gun firing, and was almost blown down the ladder again by its blast; it was so unexpected. I nipped into my little W/T "rabbit hutch" quicker than it takes to tell, and as I entered there rattled down the communication tube from the upper bridge, in a small brass case, the first enemy report of the Battle of Jutland:—"Enemy in sight, consisting of one destroyer."

The *Galatea* increased speed to 28 knots and opened fire on the destroyer. It was this first shot of the Battle of Jutland fired from the foc'sle 6-inch gun of *Galatea* at about 2.15 p.m. which had nearly blown me down the foc'sle ladder—a distinction which at the time I did not appreciate.

The first enemy report was shortly followed by several others, as first of all two German light cruisers with several more destroyers were sighted, and then more light cruisers and more destroyers, so that soon our fire was being replied to by several of the enemy. I was busy coding the several signals which were sent down to me, but could hear in between the firing of our guns, the long, drawn out whine of the enemy shells passing overhead, and a couple of crashes to port as two shells fell in the water just beyond us. Very soon afterwards there was a terrific bump just outside the little W/T room in which I was sitting, and a shell hit us below the bridge, but



*Battle Cruiser Force turns to the North en route for home*

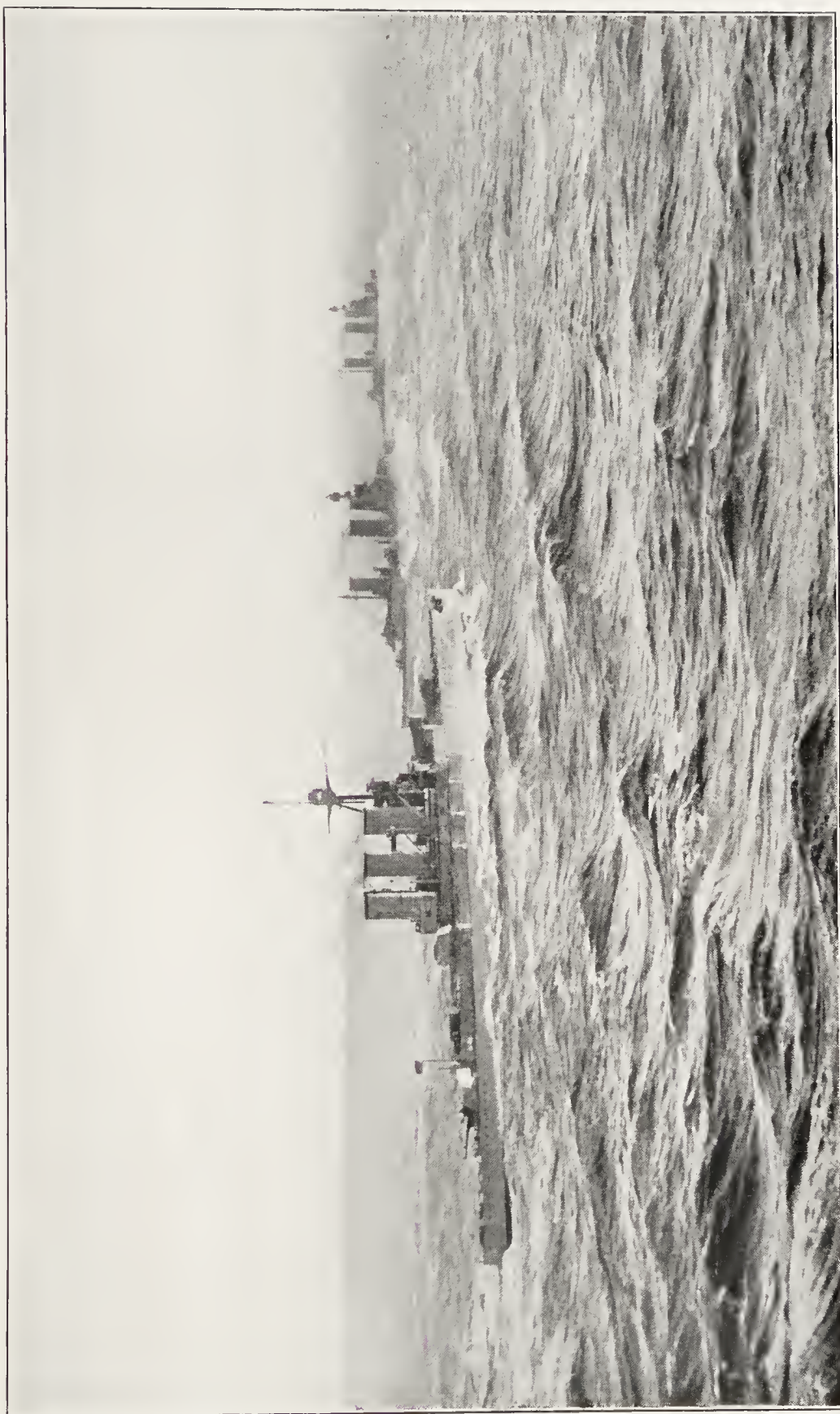
*"Galatea," late in receiving signal to turn, holds on her course, and about 2.15 p.m. sights a merchant ship being searched by a German destroyer.*

*2.20 p.m. Enemy in Sight.*

fortunately for all of us on the foc'sle and bridge, it did not explode, but pierced two or three decks and lodged in the port, the disengaged side of the ship, where it remained. An R.N.R. seaman saw it there a couple of minutes later, and thinking—goodness knows why—that it was one of our shells that had fallen down, tried to pick it up. It was still tremendously hot. "Crikey, the blighter's hot!" he yelled, and let go of it with much haste, creating an incident that for some time afterwards was a standing joke in the ship.

Our range from the enemy ships was about 14,000 yards, which in 1916 was the extreme range of our 6-inch guns, and as the enemy was shooting well, we began to haul off to the North-westward, to endeavour to lead the enemy towards our battle cruisers. The Commodore signalled to the *Lion* by W/T what he was doing, and somewhat naively added, "They all appear to be following," which was received, I believe, with





"Tiger."

"Princess Royal."

"Lion."

BATTLE CRUISER FLEET AT SEA CARRYING OUT A SWEEP.

[To face page 6.





some amusement in the Battle Cruisers and in the Battle Fleet, the latter now hurrying up to support but still a long way off.

After this there was a lull in signals for a time, and I came out of my "rabbit hutch" to have a look round. It was about 4.0 p.m., and our Battle Cruisers were in sight, tearing after the enemy which could be made out to consist of several battle cruisers in addition to the smaller fry. I must say it was a heartening sight to see the rapid director salvoes coming from the *Lion*, *Tiger*, etc., and to notice the tall columns of spray forming all round the enemy. The Germans turned and steamed South-east, our Battle Cruisers conforming, and as we had originally been on the Easterly course, the Second Light Cruiser Squadron (*Southampton*, etc.) from the starboard wing became the screen ahead of the battle cruisers, whilst we took station more or less astern. Here we remained during the run to the southward, when from about 3.45 to 4.30 the two rival battle cruiser squadrons were fiercely engaged with each other on almost parallel courses. We had a very good view of the action.

The enemy were firing well, in ripple salvoes apparently, and great plumes of foam were springing up around our ships, but I could not distinguish any hits. A large barque with full sail set was lying becalmed between the two fleets about this time, and the feelings of her crew may be imagined as salvo after salvo fell in their direction.<sup>1</sup> We in the *Galatea*, in our position astern, were steaming through the water where the German Battle Cruisers had recently passed, and I remember noticing the quantities of dead fish floating about, "Tummy-up"—killed by the detonation of shell. About this time dense clouds of yellowish smoke rose up from the surface of the sea in the midst of the German line, and the word went round that one of the Hun Battle Cruisers had been sunk, and the sailors raised a cheer. Soon afterwards, however, we passed a number of floating brass cylinders in the water, and it was found that the enemy had been making a smoke screen by means of these cylinders, the contents of which give out a thick, impenetrable smoke when in contact with water.

About 4.30 a W/T signal from *Southampton* was intercepted, reporting that the Main High Sea Fleet was in sight to the southward and was steering to the North to close the German battle cruisers, and soon afterwards, when the enemy battleships were in sight from the *Lion*, we all turned 16 points and steered back to the northward, to draw the enemy toward the Grand Fleet. . . .

---

*Thus the action was commenced. But we must break here the "Galatea's" narrative, for it has covered a long period of time since the first sighting of the enemy at 2.15 p.m., during which several important events have occurred. After receiving the reports of enemy in sight from "Galatea," Vice-Admiral*

<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough just the same incident occurred at the Dogger Bank action on 24th January, 1915, when a Dutch sailing ship passed down between the German battle cruisers and Admiral Beatty's pursuing squadron.—*Ed.*

*Beatty ordered H.M.S. "Engadine," a seaplane carrier accompanying the battle cruiser force, to send up a seaplane to reconnoitre, and at 3.8 p.m. a two-seater "Short" seaplane with a 225 H.P. Sunbeam engine flew off the water with Assistant Paymaster G. S. Trewin as Observer and Flight-Lieutenant F. J. Rutland as Pilot. "The picture from the air," says one of these officers, "of the battle cruisers and of the 'Queen Elizabeth' class battleships (5th B.S.), "with their attendant light cruiser screen and destroyers, all rushing forward "in what may be termed an orderly helter-skelter in a south-westerly direction "to cut off the enemy, is a picture that can never be forgotten."*

*The following was their Official Report of the Flight :—*

### Report of Reconnaissance Flight,<sup>1</sup>

Carried out by "Short" Seaplane, No. 8359, on 31st May, 1916.

H.M.S. *Engadine*,  
31st May, 1916.

SIR,—I have the honour to make the following report :—At 2.40 p.m. (G.M.T.), in accordance with signal and your orders, Seaplane No. 8359 was got out and proceeded to scout for enemy ships.

I was hoisted out at 3.7 p.m. (G.M.T.), and was off the water at 3.8 p.m. (Times were taken on board.)

The last information which I received from the ship was that the enemy were sighted in a N.N.E. direction, steering North.

I steered N. 10, and after about ten minutes sighted the enemy. Clouds were at 1,000 to 1,200 feet, with patches at 900 feet. This necessitated flying very low.

On sighting the enemy it was very hard to tell what they were, and so I had to close to within a mile and a half at a height of 1,000 feet. They then opened fire on me with anti-aircraft and other guns, my height enabling them to use their anti-torpedo armament.

When sighted they were steering a northerly course. I flew through several of the columns of smoke caused through bursting shrapnel.

When the Observer had counted and got the disposition of the enemy and was making his W/T report, I steered to about 3 miles, keeping the enemy well in sight. While the Observer was sending one message, the enemy turned 16 points. I drew his attention to this, and he forthwith transmitted it. The enemy then ceased firing at me. I kept on a bearing on the bows, about 3 miles distant of the enemy, and as the weather cleared a little I observed the disposition of our Fleet, and judged by the course of our Battle Cruisers that our W/T had got through.

At 3.45 p.m. a petrol pipe leading to the left carburettor broke, and my engine revolutions dropped from 1,000 to 800, and I was forced to descend.

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.



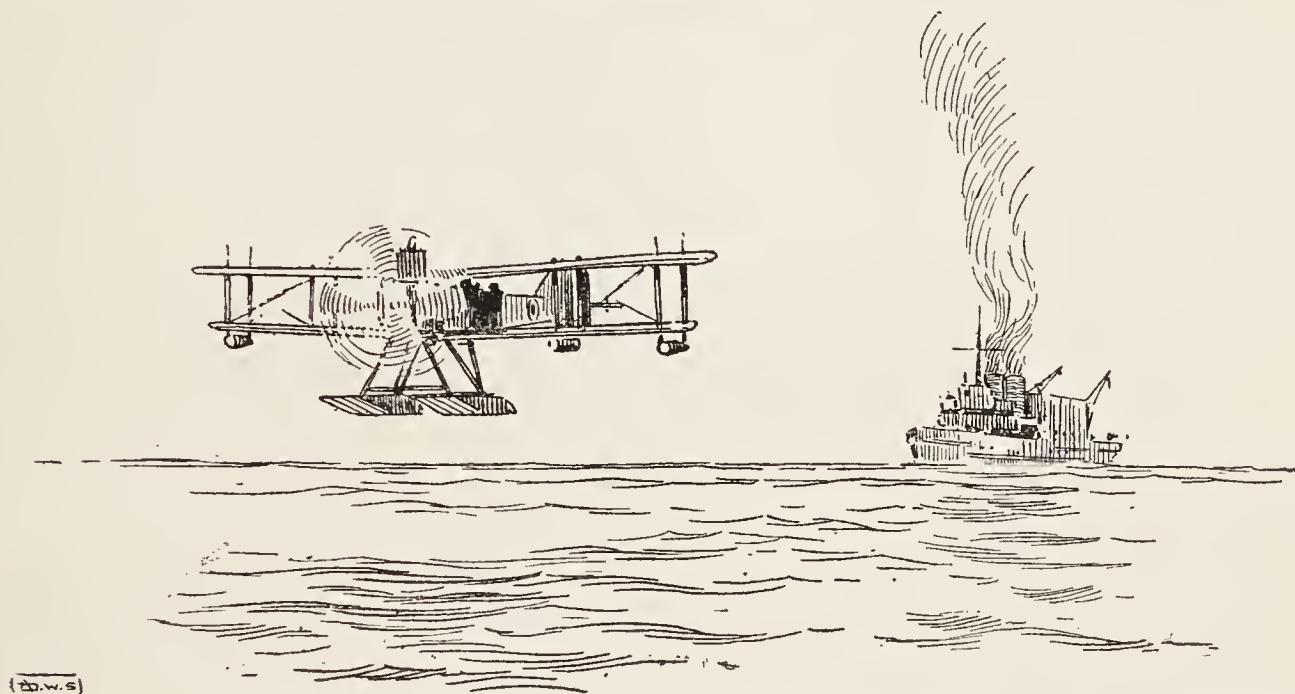
3.08 p.m. to about 4.0 p.m.

## Seaplane Reconnaissance.

On landing I made good the defect with rubber tube, and reported to the ship that I could go on again.

I was told to come alongside and be hoisted in. I was hoisted in at about 4.0 p.m.

The visibility at 1,000 feet was about 4 miles varying to one, and this reduced the advantage of Seaplane's height. Also, the Seaplane having to remain so close to the enemy, increased the chances of jamming the wireless. The messages, as sent, were received in H.M.S. *Engadine*, . . . but it was not known if the messages had been received until our Fleet were sighted and their course observed.



H.M.S. "ENGADINE" AND SEAPLANE.

I could not keep both our Fleet and the enemy's Fleet in sight, through low-lying clouds. . . .

The speed at which things took place prevented any receiving, the Observer being busy coding and sending all the time. The enemy commenced to jam latterly.

The enemy's anti-aircraft firing was fairly good ; the shock of exploding shrapnel could be felt, the explosions taking place about 200 feet away on one side, in front and astern.

I have the honour to be, SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

.....  
*Flight Lieutenant.*

## Chapter II.



### BATTLE CRUISER ACTION: THE RUN TO THE SOUTH.

3.48 TO 4.46 P.M.



Narratives from	PAGE
H.M.S. <i>Princess Royal</i> , - - - - -	11
The Gunnery Officer of H.M.S. <i>New Zealand</i> , - -	15
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## CHAPTER II.

### The Battle Cruiser Run to the South.

3.48 TO 4.46 P.M.

(See Diagram on page 2.)

Meanwhile the Battle Cruisers had worked up to full speed, had made contact with the enemy, and at 3.48 had commenced action on nearly parallel, southerly courses, at a range of 14,000 to 18,000 yards. The next hour of the action was one of the most fiercely, if not the most fiercely fought periods of the Battle of Jutland. During it H.M.S. "Indefatigable" and H.M.S. "Queen Mary" were blown up, with the loss of almost all hands—over 2,200 officers and men.

On a southerly course the action was continued for almost an hour, from 3.48 to 4.46 p.m., when the German High Sea Fleet was sighted coming up from the southward, and both Battle Cruiser Forces turned round 16 points (see photo facing p. 40), and then renewed their action on a northerly course.

The experiences of this period are described in two narratives from H.M.S. "New Zealand," and in one from H.M.S. "Princess Royal." There is also a short description of the loss of "Queen Mary," as seen from H.M.S. "Tiger," her next astern, and a narrative from one of the survivors of H.M.S. "Queen Mary."

The order of the Battle Cruisers in line during the run to the South was H.M.S. "Lion" (flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Beatty), leading, followed by H.M.S. "Princess Royal" (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Brock), "Queen Mary," "Tiger," "New Zealand" (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Pakenham), and "Indefatigable." The ships were stationed 500 yards astern of each other, course South, with alterations of course of about 20 to 40 degrees from time to time. Their speed was 25 knots for most of this period.

### Narrative from Officers of H.M.S. "Princess Royal"

(2nd Ship of the Battle Cruiser Line).

At 2.45 p.m. action stations, followed by the bugle "double," were sounded off, and all communications, instruments, etc., etc., were quickly tested. The various parties were mustered at their stations; gas masks,

goggles, and life-saving belts produced, and all other final preparations for action made. Splinter mats, fire hoses, boxes of sand, stretchers, medical instruments and drugs, leak-stopping gear, shoring-up spars, spare electrical gear, spare hydraulic gear, engineers' spare gear—all these and the various other action accessories were got ready in a few minutes as nearly everything was kept permanently ready for action when at sea.

At 3.10 the *Engadine* sent up a seaplane, and at 3.32 we first sighted the enemy, 5 battle cruisers faintly distinguishable a very long distance away, accompanied by some torpedo craft. First of all their smoke, and later the outline of their masts, funnels, and the upper parts of their hulls became visible from the gun control position aloft, but from the turrets only smoke could be observed until some while later. At 3.48<sup>1</sup> we opened fire.

The enemy had opened fire a minute or so before us, and their first few salvoes went over. Their shells seemed to throw up a much smaller splash than ours although they were firing from 12.2-inch turrets, and we from the only slightly heavier 13.5-inch turret. Their salvoes then gradually came closer, until just as we saw the red-black burst of one of our shells hitting on the leading enemy ship, we noticed the *Lion* ahead of us hit amidships, and two minutes later, at 3.56, we were hit by two 12.2-inch shells on the port side, which temporarily knocked out our "Argo" range-finder tower.

At 3.56 the enemy were bearing about 10 degrees abaft our port beam (Red 100)—steering approximately South, and both squadrons were firing heavily on each other at a rate and with a determination that made one think that something big must happen in a few minutes. The notes that a Midshipman stationed in the Conning Tower made during this time are rather human:—

"3.40. We opened fire. Their first few salvoes were over. They are 'getting very close. They have straddled us. No. 3 of the enemy line has 'been hit and is on fire. We have been hit forward. Argo tower knocked 'out. 'B' turret control. *Lion* on fire amidships. Went up to the bridge 'to find out what time we altered course, and got knocked over. M. 'staggered into conning tower badly burnt all over, and reported a large 'number of his gun's crews killed or wounded."

Between 4 o'clock and 4.38 the Germans and ourselves ran on on almost parallel courses to the southward, each endeavouring to the utmost of our ability to establish a mastery over the other. The majority of the enemy's shells appeared to fall short throwing up columns of water nearly 100 feet high, but doing no harm, and causing little of the interference that we had at the Dogger Bank action when the splashes coming inboard drenched the turrets and even the bridge, and seriously interfered with the gunlayers, range-takers, and spotting officers.

<sup>1</sup> The times in this narrative are reliable but they are not definitive, as recorders in different parts of the ship do not all agree in the times of their records. *Princess Royal's* official report gives the time of opening fire as 3.48 in accord with the record taken aloft, and times quoted taken from other records are based on this being "zero time." The times noted by the Midshipman in the Conning Tower do not appear to be very reliable.



Admiral Beatty's Six Battle Cruisers.

Destroyers taking up Action Stations.

BATTLE CRUISER FLEET SIGHTING THE ENEMY. ABOUT 3 25 P.M.

Photo taken from "Champion," ahead of the Battle Cruisers.

*To face page 12.*





However, smoke and a decreasing visibility to the eastward now became two important difficulties. Our destroyers (at about 4.2) were between us and the enemy, and their smoke, together with the smoke from *Lion's* guns which was drifting across our range, was becoming a serious nuisance to our gun control. At 4.6 we altered a point to starboard, to South, to try to avoid the smoke, and for 10 minutes the range opened, until we were firing at ranges between 18,000 and 19,000 yards, or about 11 land miles. At 12 minutes past 4 we had to check fire for a while, and we turned back to South-South-East, 20 degrees more towards the enemy, to close the range. A torpedo just at this time passed right under the centre of the ship from starboard to port—i.e., was fired from our disengaged side, so presumably came from a submarine, though I know of no one on board who sighted the submarine. When we had closed the enemy again slightly, to about 18,000 yards, it was pleasing to observe the 3rd ship of their line heavily on fire, but at 4.22, as a set off to this advantage, we lost the *Queen Mary*, and a few minutes later a salvo hit us abreast "Q" turret.

At 4.24 we altered course more to port towards the enemy, on to a South-easterly course, and the range came down from 16,000 to 12,000 yards at about 4.26 (or 4.27). We were straddling the enemy and saw their leading ship hit; then our shots came short as the enemy were altering away from us, and their shots also fell short and went ricochetting overhead, "Some with a whizz sound," as a recorder in the director tower noted, "or others with a sharp crashing sound, whilst splinters seemed to creak through the air, and we heard several small splinters strike the outside of the tower."

The Midshipman in the Conning Tower at this time again had his own method of recording succeeding events:—"Just missed by a torpedo from starboard. Turrets told not to waste ammunition. Argo repaired. We are doing 28 knots now. Felt a shock. We have been hit aft by a large shell or a torpedo. 4.29. A big fire is raging in *Lion* amidships. 4.30. Ricochet skimmed over the Conning Tower. Destroyers having a go between the lines. We are fighting the whole High Sea Fleet alone, and are getting it very hot."

This latter statement was moderately correct. At 4.36, after a turn of 20° away from the enemy to S.S.E., we lost sight of them, at a range of perhaps 16,000 to 17,000 yards, but, at the same time, sighted right ahead of us the main enemy battle fleet, which had been reported as closing towards us from the southward by our light cruiser screen a few minutes earlier.

At 4.38 we turned 16 points to starboard, following round in the wake of *Lion*, and re-engaged the enemy to starboard at a range of 15,000 yards, but this range quickly increased, and though at 4.38. Course now at 4.48 we altered course a point towards the enemy, at 4.52 Northerly. the range had become as much as 18,000 yards.

Our target was now the right hand, i.e., the rear battle cruiser, but we shifted on to the leading battle cruiser when she was visible (at

4.56), and fired 5 salvoes at her. The enemy line then altered away, and their range increased until it reached our maximum range, and we had to check fire. This was at 5.8, and we did not fire again until 5.50, when the leading battle ships of the Grand Fleet were sighted, and we had altered to starboard to close the enemy again.

After the turn to the northward, the action was much less intense than during the run to the southward. Astern of us, the 5th Battle Squadron were heavily engaged with the van of the enemy battle fleet, but in the *Princess Royal* we were out of range of these battleships, and the enemy battle cruisers had hauled off somewhat to the eastward and did not seem to be anxious to continue a close action. They were spread out over some distance, keeping bad station, and were firing with much less regularity and precision than an hour earlier.

This phase of the action was not very exciting, the only fear from the ship point of view being that we might get hit in the engine room. Our object now was to keep the enemy battle fleet following us until we could lead them into contact with the Grand Fleet.

From a gunnery point of view the firing was becoming very difficult, the range at 5.0 p.m. being as much as 19,000 yards, and the enemy were difficult to see. We shifted target two or three times as one or another of the enemy could be observed, but at 5.08 we had to check fire, being unable to see a target any longer.

The notes of the Midshipman in the Conning Tower made between 4.38 and 6.0 p.m. were these :—

“ 4.38—Altered course 16 points to starboard owing to High Sea Fleet.

“ 4.47—We are retiring on 5th Battle Squadron. Opened fire again.

“ Destroyers were recalled from their action about 5 minutes ago.

“ 4.51—5th Battle Squadron firing over our heads, going in the opposite direction.

“ 4.54—5th Battle Squadron are turning up astern and following us.

“ 4.57—Passed 6 survivors of a destroyer in a boat on starboard side, amid heaps of wreckage.

“ 4.59—*Lion* hit badly aft and big fire burning.

“ 5.00—No. 2 of the enemy's line has gone into local control. Their battle cruisers are very spread out, and there are only 4 of them ; everyone seems to think that there were 5 originally. We are reduced to *Lion*, *P.R.*, *Tiger*, *N.Z.*, and 5th Battle Squadron.

“ 5.10—Reduced to 24 knots. Destroyers have not obeyed their recall signal, but keep dashing back to fight the enemy light cruisers and destroyers.

“ 5.15—Lull in the action. People going out to stretch their legs and get a little fresh air. Hear that the shell which hit us forward early in the fight entered the Admiral's pantry and exploded. The whole of the Admiral's quarters is wrecked, and many





"New Zealand." "Indefatigable" Explosion.

"INDEFATIGABLE" BLOWING UP.



SHELLS FALLING NEAR "LION."



- "people have been killed and wounded. *Indefatigable* and  
" *Q.M.* have both blown up.  
" 5.36—Prepare for action again.  
" 5.42—Sighted submarine on the starboard beam.  
" 5.43—Opened fire again.  
" 5.44—Another submarine on starboard beam. The battle is not very  
" furious at present.  
" 5.55—Part of our battle fleet is in sight.  
" 6.0—They have opened fire."
- 

### H.M.S. "New Zealand."

Three ships astern of H.M.S. "Princess Royal" the battle cruiser H.M.S. "New Zealand" was stationed. She had been a gift ship to the Mother Country from the Dominion of New Zealand in 1912. During the battle-cruiser duel her experiences were similar to those of the "Princess Royal," and an officer stationed in the gun control position aloft on the foremast describes the opening incidents of the battle; how the news of enemy ships being in the vicinity "was received in the ward-room with cold suspicion, and although "one or two officers came on deck to have a look round, the general attitude "was one of scepticism. Then came the report of a large amount of smoke, "probably of a fleet bearing east-north-east, and we started to 'sit up and take "notice.' Action stations were sounded, and as I climbed," he continues, "on to the rungs of the mast to go aloft, a sailor asked breathlessly if the Huns "were in sight, and I told him that they were. All turrets and stations were "reported cleared away and correct in record time!"

But it was still hard to realise that a battle was actually commencing. "I had great difficulty in convincing myself that the Huns were in sight at "last, it was so like battle exercise the way in which we and the Germans turned "up on to more or less parallel courses and waited for the range to close suffi- "ciently before letting fly at each other. It all seemed very cold-blooded and "mechanical, no chance here of seeing red, merely a case of cool scientific "calculation and deliberate gunfire. Everyone seemed cool enough, too, in the "control position, all sitting quietly at their instruments waiting for the fight "to commence.

"Shortly after opening fire the "Indefatigable," our next astern, blew "up and sank. An Assistant Paymaster, who was keeping a record of the "action immediately behind me, said "Indefatigable"—hit'; he was going "to say 'sunk,' but thought it might rattle the control party. We hardly noticed "the ship had gone.

"The Captain then passed the order to engage the rear ship of the enemy's "line, which we did, straddling her at once. Hits at this time were observed on "both fourth and fifth ships.



## Chap. II.—Battle Cruiser Run to the South.

*“ At 4.22 the fifth German ship was obscured by mist, and fire was shifted to the fourth ship, which was straddled almost at once, and hits were again observed. At about this time ‘ X ’ turret was hit by a heavy shell, but I knew nothing of this till later, when during a lull I had a telephone message from the officer of the turret, reporting that ‘ his turret had been hit by a very large ‘ brick ’ ; he thought he was dead ; found he was not ; and was carrying on ! ”*



**“NEW ZEALAND” PASSING LAST EXPLOSION OF “QUEEN MARY.”**

*“ At about 4.35 the stern of a ship projecting about 70 feet out of the water, with the propellers revolving slowly, drifted into the field of my glasses ; clouds of white paper were blowing out of the after-hatch, and on her stern I read “ Queen Mary.” She passed us about 100 yards on our port beam, and a moment later there was a blinding flash, a dull heavy roar, which ceased as suddenly as it began, followed by a few seconds’ silence, and then the patter of falling debris. All that was left of the ‘ Queen Mary ’ was a great mushroom-shaped cloud of smoke about 600 to 800 feet high, which temporarily obscured our view of the enemy, but a few seconds later we drew clear, re-sighted the enemy, and opened fire again.”*

*A narrative from the Navigating Officer of the ship describes the early stages of the action, and gives further detail of the loss of H.M.S. “ Indefatigable.”*

## Narrative by the Navigating Officer of H.M.S. "New Zealand."

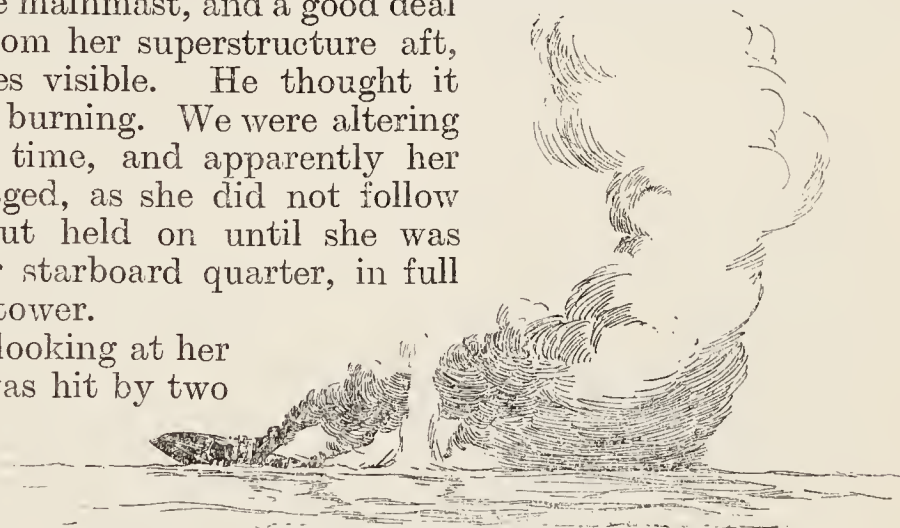
My action station was in the conning tower, together with the Torpedo Officer, the Assistant Navigating Officer, the Admiral's Secretary, Chief Petty Officer Fitzgerald, the Chief Quartermaster, and several seamen ratings tending the voice pipes, etc. Admiral Pakenham, with his Flag Lieutenant, was on the upper bridge, where they remained throughout the action, together with our Captain, Capt. John Green, who was wearing the Maori rush kilt or war mat, called a *piu-piu*, which had been given to the ship by a Maori Chief in the ship's cruise round the world in 1913-14, with the injunction that it was always to be worn by the Captain of the *New Zealand* when in action.<sup>1</sup> . . .

At about 3.50 the action was commenced by both sides opening fire almost simultaneously. We had only been in action a few minutes, when the Admiral's Secretary came across to where the Torpedo Officer was stationed in the conning tower and drew his attention to the *Indefatigable*. He crossed at once to the starboard side and laid his glasses on her. She had been

hit aft, apparently by the mainmast, and a good deal of smoke was coming from her superstructure aft, but there were no flames visible. He thought it was only her boom boats burning. We were altering course to port at the time, and apparently her steering gear was damaged, as she did not follow round in our wake, but held on until she was about 500 yards on our starboard quarter, in full view from the conning tower.

Whilst he was still looking at her through his glasses she was hit by two shells, one on the foc'sle and one on the fore turret. Both shells appeared to explode on impact. Then there

was an interval of about 30 seconds, during which there was absolutely no sign of fire or flame or smoke, except the little actually formed by the burst of the two shells, which was not considerable. At the end of the interval of about 30 seconds the ship completely blew up, commencing



THE SINKING OF THE "INDEFATIGABLE."

<sup>1</sup> With the gift was made a prophecy that the ship would one day be in action and would be hit in three places—on the after turret, on the fore-top, and on the conning tower—but that the casualties would not be serious. At Jutland we were hit only on the after turret, and there were no casualties.

We had told the Maori chief at the time of the prophecy that what he said might come true, but that it was of no personal interest to the officers and men then in the ship, as on 1st September, 1914, we were due to pay off and a completely new set of officers and men would join the *New Zealand*. But the Maori chief



apparently from for'ard. The main explosion started with sheets of flame, followed immediately afterwards by a dense, dark smoke, which obscured the ship from view. All sorts of stuff was blown high into the air, a 50-foot steam picket boat, for example, being blown up about 200 feet, apparently intact though upside down.

The loss of our next astern happened so suddenly that, almost before we realised she had gone, our attention was entirely absorbed in the very fierce battle that was now progressing. The noise of our own salvoes, and the shrieking of the enemy's shells falling over or short, and throwing up great sheets of spray, left one with little time to think of anything except the work in hand. I personally was fully occupied in keeping station on our next ahead together with plotting our position on the chart, for we were being led by the Flagship along a snake-like course, to reduce the chances of being hit. The enemy could be seen on our port beam at a range of about 16,000 yards, but the damage that we were inflicting on them could not be made out at this distance. For the next half-hour the battle continued on a south-easterly course, the German fire steadily growing less accurate and at times becoming quite wild, whilst we were maintaining a steady flow of salvoes.

All seemed to be going well with us, when suddenly I saw a salvo hit *Queen Mary* on her port side. A small cloud of what looked like coal-dust came out from where she was hit, but nothing more until several moments later, when a terrific yellow flame with a heavy and very dense mass of black smoke showed ahead, and the *Queen Mary* herself was no longer visible. The *Tiger* was steaming at 24 knots only 500 yards astern of *Queen Mary*, and hauled sharply out of the line to port and disappeared in this dense mass of smoke. We hauled out to starboard, and *Tiger* and ourselves passed one on each side of the *Queen Mary*. We passed her about 50 yards on our port beam, by which time the smoke had blown fairly clear, revealing the stern from the after funnel aft afloat, and the propellers still revolving, but the for'ard part had already gone under. There was no sign of fire or of cordite flame, and men were crawling out of the top of the after turret and up the after hatchway. When we

was emphatic that it was the *same* officers and men who would be in the ship at the action, and he turned out to be right, for the outbreak of war stopped the ship from paying off, and many of the officers and men in her in 1913 were still in her at Jutland and later.

The rush kilt which the captain wore is made of strips of flax woven together at the top and is worn tied round the waist. The strips reach down to the knee and at intervals are dyed black, giving the appearance of a black and white kilt. A green-stone "tiki" was also given with the kilt, and this was worn round the neck on a string of flax. Much faith was put in these mascots by the seamen, and I am sure that the word was passed round before the action began that the "skipper" was wearing the piu-piu and tiki all right. Over a year later, on the last occasion that we sighted enemy ships during the war, on 17th November, 1917, there was rather an amusing example of their faith in the mascots. Early in the morning some German light cruisers were sighted and engaged by our light cruisers, and in the *New Zealand* we went to action stations. The Admiral, the Captain (now Captain Webb), and myself were all on the upper bridge when I saw a sailor come up the ladder, peep round the corner and then disappear again.

"It's all right, he's got it on," I heard him tell several men on the lower bridge, from which I understood that he was a scout sent out when there was a possibility of an action to make sure that the Captain actually was wearing the piu-piu and the tiki!





"Queen Mary."

"Princess Royal." "Lion."

"QUEEN MARY." Photo taken from "Tiger" about two hours before the Action.



COMMENCEMENT OF THE ACTION AS SEEN FROM "CHAMPION."

British Battle Cruisers are Behind the Smoke.



were abreast and only about 150 yards away from her, this after portion rolled over and, as it did so, blew up. The most noticeable thing was the masses and masses of paper which were blown into the air as this after portion exploded. Great masses of iron were thrown into the air, and things were falling into the sea round us. There was still up in the air, I suppose at least 100 or 200 feet high, a boat which may have been a dinghy or a pinnace, still intact but upside down as I could see the thwarts. Before we had quite passed, *Queen Mary* completely disappeared.

This second disaster was rather stunning, but the only sign from the Flagship was a signal, "Battle cruisers alter course two points to port"—i.e., towards the enemy.

The four of us now remaining continued to fire steady salvos, and the enemy did not appear to be able to take advantage of their success. The spirits of our men were splendid. In spite of the fact that they had all plainly seen the *Queen Mary* blow up, the idea of defeat did not seem to enter their heads. . . .

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## Description from H.M.S. "Tiger"

### of the Loss of "Queen Mary."

My station was in the Conning Tower, and I remember thinking how splendid the enemy battle cruisers looked when they turned to the southward, their last ship in particular showing up wonderfully.

Both squadrons opened fire almost together, the Germans appearing to fire in ripples down their line starting from their leading ship. Their first salvo at us was about 200 yards short, and the next straddled us—one shot short, two hits (aft), and one over, the two hits temporarily knocking out "Q" and "X" turrets.

The German shooting at this time was very good, and we were repeatedly straddled, but funnily enough were not being hit very often. I remember watching the shell coming at us. They appeared just like big blue-bottles flying straight towards you, each time going to hit you in the eye; then they would fall, and the shell would either burst or else ricochet off the water and lollop away above and beyond you, turning over and over in the air.

The *Queen Mary* was next ahead of us, and I remember watching her for a little and I saw one salvo straddle her. Three shells out of four hit, and the impression one got of seeing the splinters fly and the dull red burst was as if no damage was being done, but that the armour was keeping the shell out. The next salvo that I saw straddled her, and two more shells hit her. As they hit I saw a dull red glow amidships and then the ship seemed to open out like a puff ball, or one of those toadstool things



when one squeezes it. Then there was another dull red glow somewhere forward, and the whole ship seemed to collapse inwards. The funnels and masts fell into the middle, and the hull was blown outwards. The roofs of the turrets were blown 100 feet high, then everything was smoke, and a bit of the stern was the only part of the ship left above water. The *Tiger* put her helm hard-a-starboard, and we just cleared the remains of the *Queen Mary's* stern by a few feet.

On coming out of the smoke of the explosion, we went on to full speed and got into station astern of the *Princess Royal*. I noticed about this time that the shooting of the Germans was getting steadily worse, and I put it down to their being badly hit by our squadrons, because we saw several fires on board their ships, and one ship hauled out of the line, due either to shell fire or else to a torpedo hit. Our destroyers had just attacked them with torpedoes. . . .

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### Loss of H.M.S. "Queen Mary."

Narrative of Petty Officer (Gunner's Mate) E. Francis, of "X" Turret,  
H.M.S. "Queen Mary."<sup>1</sup>

This represents a copy of a letter I sent to the Senior Surviving Officer of H.M.S. *Queen Mary*, and I am asking that whoever reads this at any time will please remember that the writer is much handier behind a pair of 13.5-inch guns than behind a pen.

I had the first dog watch (4.0 to 6.0 p.m.), in the battery so I made arrangements with the Gunner's Mate on watch to send a man down and let me know when it was 3.30 p.m. We lay down and had quite a comfortable sleep, having nothing on our mind to keep us awake.

At 3.30 an able seaman came down and said, "Petty Officer Francis, it 'is nearly seven bells." I thanked him, and said, "Anything doing up 'top?" He said "No." I got up, took off my jumper, and had a wash in a bucket of water, and just as I had finished I heard in the distance a bugle sound of "Action." I was so surprised that I could hardly believe my ears, but the rush of feet by the door forced it upon me. I took the first hatchway up, and came up to the foremost 4-inch battery, starboard side, and raced for "X" turret. When I got inside everyone was there. I yelled out "Turret's crew, number." They were correct from top to bottom, and I reported to the Lieutenant of the Turret. He said, "Test loading gear, 'but for goodness' sake don't let them go too rash." The loading gear and machinery were tested, and immediately afterwards came the order to load all cages. As soon as the cages were loaded, it was reported to the Trans-

<sup>1</sup> The Editors feel it their duty to point out that this narrative is not accurate in several of its statements about the action, such as the number of German ships in sight, etc.



A Salvo short of "Lion."

"Queen Mary" Blowing up.

**"QUEEN MARY" BLOWING UP,**

And a Salvo falling round H.M.S. "Lion."

Both photos taken from H.M.S. "Lydiard." Being roughly the same scale, they show the great size of the smoke cloud of "Queen Mary's" explosion. The base of the smoke cloud is almost exactly the full length of "Queen Mary."





mitting Station, and then came the order to load; the guns were loaded and brought to the half-cock and reported, and then came the order to bring the right gun to the ready, director laying and firing. Shortly after this the first salvo was fired, and we had started on the great game.

I had no means of telling what the time was, and if I had I probably should not have looked, because getting a turret started is an anxious rushing time for a Captain of a turret; once started it is easy to keep going. Taking everything into consideration, I put it as about 3.45 or 3.55; that's as near as I can go.

The gun's crew were absolutely perfect, inclined to be a little swift in loading, but I gave them a yell and pointed out to them that I wanted a steady stride, and after that everything went like clockwork, until suddenly both rammers gave out, my gun going first. This was caused through No. 3 opening the breech before the gun had run out after firing; the carrier arm part of the breech must have hit the rammer head and slightly metal-bound it. I dropped the elevating wheel, got hold of a steel pinch bar, forced the end in behind the rammer head, at the same time putting the rammer lever over to "Run out"; out went the rammer, and I rushed it back again, and then out again, and it went all gay once more. Then the lever was passed over to the right gun, and both rammers were once more in working order. I was pleased to get them going again, as it would have been such a damper on the crew if we had had to go into hand loading.

My No. 3 said, "Petty Officer Francis, can you see what we are up against?" Well, I had been anxious to have a look, but could not spare the time, but as soon as my gun had fired and while the loading was being completed I had a quick look through the periscope, and it seemed to me there were hundreds of masts and funnels.<sup>1</sup> I dropped back into my seat and laid my gun by pointer, being in director firing, and while the loading was being completed again I told them there were a few battle cruisers out, not wishing to put a damper on them in any way; not that I think it would have done so, as they were all splendid fellows and backed me up magnificently.

Up till now I had not noticed any noise, such as being struck by a shell, but soon afterwards there was a heavy blow struck, I should imagine, in the after 4-inch battery, and a lot of dust and pieces were flying around on top of "X" turret. My attention was called by the turret trainer, A.B. Long, who reported the front glass of his periscope blocked up. This was not very important, because we were in director training,<sup>2</sup> but someone in rear heard him report his glass foul, and without orders dashed on top and cleared it. He must have been smashed as he did it, for he fell in front of the periscope, groaning, and then apparently fell off the turret. I wish I knew his name, poor chap, but it's no use guessing. Another

<sup>1</sup> This is an exaggeration.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> In Director firing the turret gunlayers and trainers follow pointers worked from a master position and do not have to look out through their glass at the enemy at all. The master position also fires the guns when the turret's crew have brought them to the "ready."

## Chap. II.—Battle Cruiser Run to the South.

shock was felt shortly after this, but it did not affect the turret, so no notice was taken. The Transmitting Station reported that the third ship of the line was dropping out. First blood to *Queen Mary*. The shout they gave was good to hear. I could not resist taking a quick look at her at their request, and I saw the third ship of their line was going down by the bows. I felt the turret training a bit faster than she had been, and surmised we must have shifted on to the fourth ship of the line; being in director firing no orders were required for training. I looked again, and the third ship of the line was gone. I turned to the spare gunlayer, P. O. Killick, who was recording the number of rounds fired, and asked him how many rounds the left gun had fired, and he said 30 something odd figures. I didn't catch the exact number. A few more rounds were fired, and I took another look through my periscope, and there was quite a fair distance between the second ship, and what I believe was the fourth ship, due, I think, to the third ship going under. Flames were belching up from what I believe to be the fourth ship of the line.

Then came the big explosion, which shook us a bit, and on looking at the pressure gauge I saw the pressure had failed.

Immediately after that came what I term the big smash, and I was dangling in the air on a bowline, which saved me from being thrown down on to the floor of the turret; these bowlines were an idea I had brought into the turret, and each man in the gun-house was supplied with one, and, as far as I noticed, the men who had them on were not injured in the big smash. Nos. 2 and 3 of the left gun slipped down under the gun, and the gun appeared to me to have fallen through its trunnions and smashed up these two numbers. Everything in the ship went as quiet as a church, the floor of the turret was bulged up, and the guns were absolutely useless. I must mention here that there was not a sign of excitement. One man turned to me and said, "What do you think has happened?" I said "Steady every one, I will speak to Mr. Ewart." I went back to the cabinet and said, "What do you think has happened, sir?" He said "God only knows." "Well, sir," I said, "it's no use keeping them all down here, why not send them up round the 4-inch guns, and give them a chance to fight it out. As soon as the Germans find we are out of action they will concentrate on us, and we shall all be going sky high." He said, "Yes, good idea. Just see whether the 4-inch guns aft are still standing."

I put my head up through the hole in the roof of the turret, and I nearly fell back through again. The after 4-inch battery was smashed right out of all recognition, and then I noticed the ship had an awful list to port. I dropped back inside the turret and told Lieut. Ewart the state of affairs. He said, "Francis, we can do no more than give them a chance; clear the turret." "Clear the turret," I called out, and out they all went.

P.O. Stares was the last I saw coming up from the working chamber, and I asked whether he had passed the order to the magazine and shell room, and he told me it was no use, as the water was right up the trunk





SALVO FALLING SHORT OF "LION."



SHELL SHORT OF "LION."

[To face page 22.





leading from the shell room, so the bottom of the ship must have been out of her. Then I said, "Why didn't you come up?" He simply said, "There was no order to leave the turret."

I went through the cabinet and out through the top with the Lieutenant of the Turret following me; suddenly he stopped and went back into the turret. I believe he went back because he thought there was someone left inside. It makes me feel sore-hearted when I think of him and that fine crowd who were with me in the turret. I can only write about the splendid behaviour of my own turret's crew, but I am confident, knowing the *Queen Mary* as I did, that the highest traditions of the service were upheld by the remainder of the ship's company, from the Captain down to the youngest boy. Everyone was so keen on being in a big fight, and each member of our ship's company knew he was one of the small cog-wheels of a great machine; it was part of a man's training as laid down by our Gunnery Commander, and due to his untiring efforts to make the *Queen Mary* the splendid fighting unit I knew her to be.

I was half-way down the ladder at the back of the turret when Lieutenant Ewart went back; the ship had an awful list to port by this time, so much so that men getting off the ladder went sliding down to port. I got on to the bottom rung of the ladder, but could not by my own efforts reach the stanchions lying on the deck from the starboard side. I knew if I let go that I should go sliding down to port like some of the others must have done, and probably get smashed up sliding down. Two of my turret's crew, seeing my difficulty, came to my assistance; they were A.B. Long, turret trainer, and A.B. Lane, No. 4 of the left gun. Lane held Long at full stretch from the ship's side, and I dropped from the ladder, caught Long's legs, and so gained the starboard side. These two men had no thought for their own safety; they saw I wanted assistance, and that was good enough for them. When I got on to the ship's side there seemed to be quite a fair crowd, and they did not appear to be very anxious to take to the water. I called out to them, "Come on, you chaps, who's coming for a swim?" Someone answered, "She will float for a long time yet," but something, I don't pretend to understand what it was, seemed to be urging me to get away, so I clambered up over the slimy bilge keel and fell off into the water, followed, I should think, by about five other men.

I struck away from the ship as hard as I could, and must have covered nearly 50 yards, when there was a big smash, and stopping and looking round the air seemed to be full of fragments and flying pieces. A large piece seemed to be right above my head, and acting on an impulse I dipped under to avoid being struck, and stayed under as long as I could, and then came to the top again, when coming behind me I heard a rush of water, which looked very much like a surf breaking on a beach, and I realised it was the suction or back-wash from the ship which had just gone. I hardly had time to fill my lungs with air when it was on me; I felt it was no use struggling against it, so I let myself go for a moment or two, then

## Chap. II.—Battle Cruiser Run to the South.

I struck out, but I felt it was a losing game, and remarked to myself mentally, "What's the use of you struggling, you're done," and actually eased my efforts to reach the top, when a small voice seemed to say "Dig out."

I started afresh, and something bumped against me. I grasped it, and afterwards found it was a large hammock; it undoubtedly pulled me to the top, more dead than alive, and I rested on it, but I felt I was getting very weak, and roused myself sufficiently to look around for something more substantial to support me. Floating right in front of me was a piece of timber (I believe the centre baulk of our pattern 4 target). I managed to push myself on the hammock close to the timber, and grasped a piece of rope hanging over the side. My next difficulty was to get on top, and I was beginning to give up hope, when the swell lifted me nearly on top, and with a small amount of exertion I kept on. I managed to reeve my arms through a strop, and then I must have become unconscious.

When I came to my senses again I was half-way off the spar, but managed to get back again. I was very sick, and seemed to be full up with oil fuel. My eyes were blocked up completely with it, and I could not see; I suppose the oil had got a bit dry and crusted. I managed, by turning back the sleeve of my jersey which was thick with oil, to expose a part of the sleeve of my flannel, and thus managed to get the thick oil off my face and eyes, which were aching awfully. Then I looked around, and seeing no one else, believed I was the only one left out of that fine ship's company. What had really happened was the *Laurel* had come up and picked up the remainder, and not seeing me lying on the spar had gone away out of the zone of fire, so how long I was in the water I do not know.

I was miserably cold, but not without hope of being picked up, as it seemed to me that I had only got to keep quiet and a ship would come for me.

After what seemed ages to me some destroyers came racing along, and I got up on the spar, steadied myself for a second, and waved my arms. The *Petard*, one of our destroyers, saw me and came over, but when I got up on the spar to wave to them the swell rolled the spar over, and I fell off. I was nearly exhausted again getting back. The destroyer came up and a line was thrown to me, which, needless to say, I grabbed hold of for all I was worth, and was quickly hauled up on to the decks of the destroyer. The first words I heard spoken were English, not German, and I must have managed to convince them that I was English. I remembered no more until I came to and found I was lying on what seemed to be a leather settee, and someone was telling me that I was all right and not to struggle.

I could not see the faces round me, so concluded I was blind, but did not feel then that it mattered much; my thoughts flew to the fine crowd who had gone under. I cannot speak too highly of the way I was cared for on board the *Petard*, and I thank them one and all.



SALVO FALLING CLOSE TO "LION"

Photo taken from a Destroyer's Bridge, with Signal Rocket in the foreground.







I was given some spirits of some sort, and then must have gone to sleep ; someone came over to me and said, " Don't get excited if you hear any shooting, but we are going to carry out an attack on a big German." I wasn't in a fit state to worry much about attacks on Germans.

My eyes were very painful, and I must have said something about them, for I believe a young doctor came down and started to bathe them, when suddenly there was a big smash, and I was told afterwards that a shell came through, killed the doctor and eight men, and I never received a scratch. I couldn't see, and, being a gunnery man, I took the smash to be a 4-inch gun being fired ; I had no idea it was a German shell.<sup>1</sup>

I must have gone off to sleep again, when I was wakened by some of the chaps who were taking me down to the Petty Officers' quarters, as by this time they had found out I was a Gunner's Mate. I believe in the first place I told them I was a Stoker.

Nothing happened after this of any importance, only I was in awful agony with my eyes. I was told we were steaming at greatly reduced speed to Rosyth, and arrived, as near as I can guess, about midnight on the 1st June. The Hospital Boat came over, and I was very quickly taken to Queensferry Hospital, where I was soon made nice and comfortable in bed, feeling that my troubles were over, and thanking God, Who I feel was very near me on that great day, and Who pulled me through. I fell asleep and woke up to find the doctor waiting to clean my eyes ; he would not disturb me before.

After my eyes had been seen to I felt much relieved ; the doctor told me to keep the bandage on and my eyes would be all right again soon. I left the Hospital on the Monday (June 5th), having previously on two days running asked the Fleet Surgeon to let me go south ; I felt the groans of the burnt and wounded would have driven me mad. He told me that if I could get some clothes I could go. I met a Ward Master whom I had known some years ago, and he fitted me out with clothes gathered from the Hospital Staff, and made me look quite presentable. I left Edinburgh by the midnight train, and on arrival at London went to the Union Jack Club, where I had a good breakfast. I left London and arrived at the Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth, where I reported myself, and was allowed to proceed home. The next day I was given some clothes, and saw the doctor who advised me what to do about my eyes, and very kindly allowed me to go home on 14 days' leave. When I returned off leave I saw the doctor again, and he said, " Your nerves are gone, you want a rest," and sent me home for another 14 days. When I returned off leave I was feeling much better, and my eyes were nearly quite well again.

At the time of writing they are all right, but tire very quickly.

To finish my account, I will say that I believe the cause of the ship being blown up was a shell striking " B " turret working chamber and igniting the shells stowed there in the ready racks, and the flash must have passed down into the magazine, and that was the finish.

<sup>1</sup> See H.M.S. *Petard's* narrative, page 30.

## Chapter III.



### LIGHT FORCES WITH THE BATTLE CRUISERS.

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Accounts of the Destroyer Attack carried out between about  
4.15 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

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Sighting the High Seas Fleet, about 4.45 p.m.



Narratives from

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## CHAPTER III.

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### Light Forces with the Battle Cruisers.

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#### 13th FLOTILLA'S DESTROYER ATTACK.

4.15 P.M. TO ABOUT 5.30 P.M.

*During the run to the South the 2nd L.C.S. and the destroyers attached to the Battle Cruiser Force had taken station ahead of the "Lion," with the exception of a few of those destroyers which had not sufficient speed to gain on the battle cruisers and so were left steaming abreast of them, where, incidentally, they acted as a submarine screen.*

*The destroyers of the 13th Flotilla were under the command of Captain (D) J. U. Farie, of H.M.S. "Champion," and half-way through the run to the South this flotilla was ordered to make a torpedo attack upon the enemy battle cruisers. The initiation of this movement is described in Admiral Beatty's despatch, as follows:—*

*"Eight destroyers of the 13th Flotilla, 'Nestor,' 'Nomad,' 'Nicator,' 'Narborough,' 'Pelican,' 'Petard,' 'Obdurate,' 'Nerissa,' with 'Moorsom' and 'Morris' of 10th Flotilla, 'Turbulent' and 'Termagant' of the 9th Flotilla, having been ordered to attack the enemy with torpedoes when opportunity offered, moved out at 4.15 p.m. simultaneously with a similar movement on the part of the enemy. The attack was carried out in the most gallant manner, and with great determination."*<sup>1</sup>

*It was carried out at high speed, as torpedo attacks always are, in order to lessen the time during which the flotilla was under close enemy gunfire. A position somewhere on the enemy's bow about four to five miles from them, was the goal of the flotilla, from where they could fire their torpedoes with good prospects of success. On being ordered to commence the attack they steamed ahead of the "Lion" for some little distance, and then turned sharply towards the enemy, "Nestor's" Division leading, then "Obdurate's," then "Narborough's," and on courses roughly between east and north-east crossed the intervening space between our Battle Cruiser Line and their goal.*

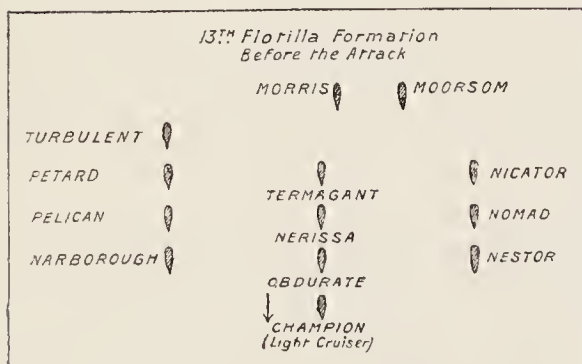
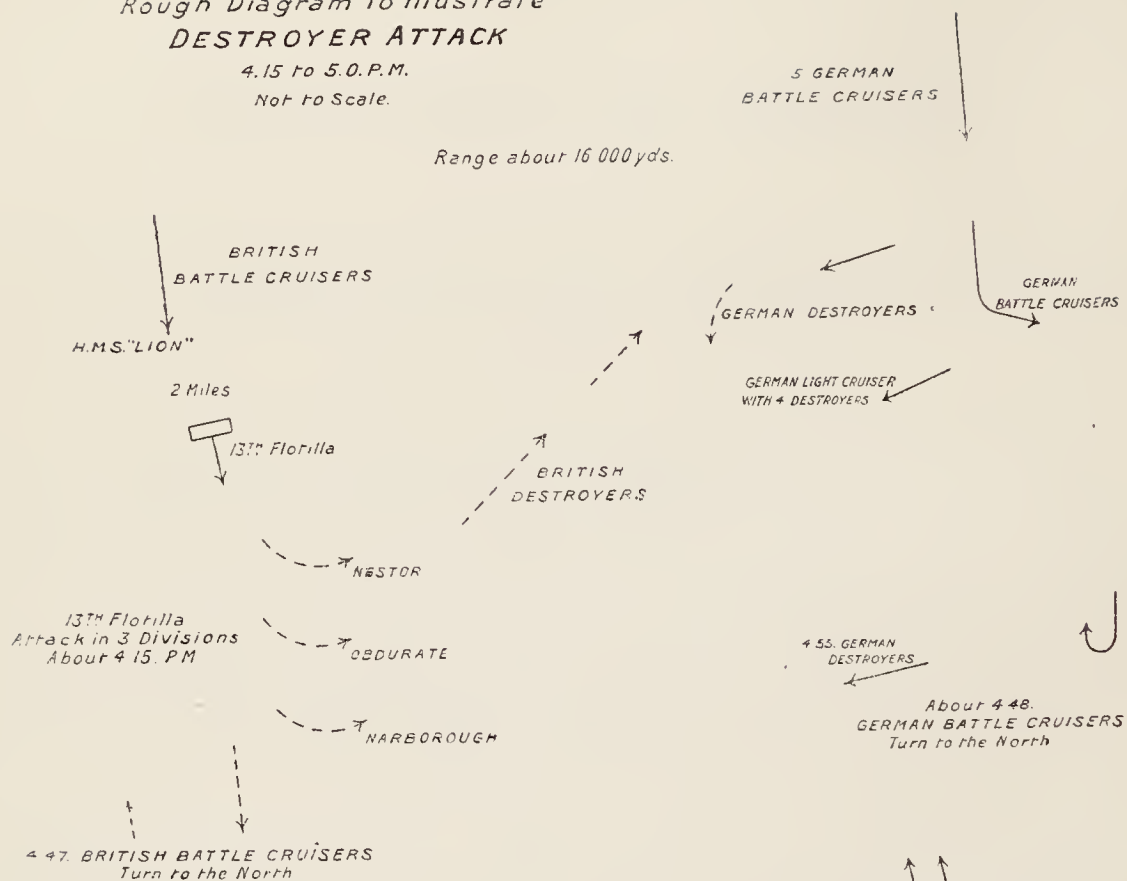
<sup>1</sup> V. A., B. C. F.'s Despatch: Enclosure to Commander-in-Chief's Despatch.

# *Rough Diagram To Illustrate DESTROYER ATTACK*

4.15 to 5.0 P.M.

Not to Scale.

Range about 16 000 yds.



GERMAN HIGH SEAS FLEET Comes Into Range About 5.0 P.M.



*As our destroyers showed their intention to attack, a German Destroyer Flotilla was sent out to prevent them, and the rival destroyers met in the "No Man's Land" and engaged each other with gunfire, the Germans apparently turning from a westerly course on to a south-westerly course, so passing our flotillas on opposite courses as we held to the north-east. The fight was not closely held by the Germans. They quickly passed, almost flashed by, and allowed our destroyers to reach their objective and fire torpedoes at the enemy battle cruisers without serious interference.*

*A picture of the return of some of our boats as noticed by an Officer of H.M.S. "Badger," which was acting as submarine screen to the battle cruisers, was described in these words:—*

*"Another thing that caught my eye was a flotilla of our destroyers returning from a torpedo attack, led by a light cruiser, going 'full out' for safety to the disengaged side of our big ships. They were closing diagonally the wake of our battle cruisers, which were then on a north-westerly course. The enemy were firing accurately into the midst of this flotilla, as one might loose off a shotgun into a flight of starlings, but not one of our boats were hit, although projectiles were falling thick in the midst of them."*

*But whilst the attack was in progress and the British destroyers were disputing with the German destroyers for local "command of the sea," the German Battle Fleet arrived all unexpectedly into range from the southward, and unfortunately were so placed that they could finish off two of our destroyers which had been damaged in the fighting. "Nestor" and "Nomad" were sunk, though not before they had deliberately closed on the German Battle Fleet, together with "Nicator" and "Moorsom," and fired their remaining torpedoes at the German Battle Line—an even more important torpedo target than the German battle cruisers.*

*A description of the attack is contained in the narrative of H.M.S. "Galatea," at that time stationed to the northward of our Battle Cruiser Line:—*

*"One outstanding incident was a torpedo attack by three or four destroyers of the 13th Flotilla on the German Lines, led by Commander Bingham in the 'Nestor.' 'Nestor' and 'Nomad' were disabled and later sunk, but the other two destroyers got away, and their escape was most spectacular. They appeared directly astern of us out of a thick cloud of funnel smoke which they were making to screen themselves, zigzagging like a couple of snipe, at times their high white bow wave the only part of them visible, and a tornado of shells were falling all round them. Apparently they would watch the flash from the ships firing at them and then put their helms over, and the place where they had been a moment before, still barely a ship's length from them, would be lashed and torn into tall pillars of water. It seemed impossible that they could escape as time after time they were obliterated from sight by salvoes, but presently their bow waves would appear again and they would emerge, only to be blotted out once more a moment later. It was a thrilling sight, and we afterwards discovered that these two destroyers got safely away."*

## Narrative of H.M.S. "Petard" of 13th Destroyer Flotilla.

Shortly after the enemy battle cruisers were sighted, the 13th Flotilla were ordered by *Lion* to take station ahead and we proceeded to form on H.M.S. *Champion*, which took station about two miles directly ahead of *Lion*, and the flotilla formed up in three divisions in line ahead disposed abeam, astern of her.

Soon after *Queen Mary* blew up, *Champion* ordered *Nestor's* Division to attack the enemy with torpedoes, and I watched them turn away to port and close the enemy; then *Obdurate's* Division followed, and shortly afterwards my Division, which was led by *Narborough*.

As we steamed over towards the German line I noticed that the German Destroyer Flotilla were carrying out a similar movement towards our line; and the two flotillas appeared to form more or less into two single lines on nearly opposite courses to the battle cruisers, with the leading destroyers of each line fairly close together, and the distance apart gradually increasing the further one was stationed down the line. We opened fire on what seemed to be our opposite number at about 6,000 yards' range, and rapidly closed to about 3,000 yards. I cannot say I remember much about our shooting or about the German shooting, as I was fully occupied with handling the ship, but I remember our steaming light falling down with a crash from aloft when the halliards had been cut through by a shell. At this time Mr. Epworth, my torpedo gunner, fired a torpedo, which was set to run 6 feet deep, high-speed setting, at a bunch of four German destroyers which were close together, and the tubes' crews state they shortly afterwards noticed a very large explosion in the after part of one of them, which I hope was caused by this torpedo. Almost immediately after this we fired another torpedo at about 9,000 yards' range at the German Battle Cruiser Line, and then turned to starboard to a slightly converging, but nearly parallel, course to the German battle cruisers. We steamed ahead a little, and when about four points on their bow fired the remaining two torpedoes. By this time the German destroyers seemed to have disappeared, leaving two of their number behind, so that after firing our last torpedo we fired two or three salvoes at a German light cruiser which had closed, apparently to assist his destroyers.

Having now fired all my torpedoes, I turned towards our Battle Cruiser Line, which had by this time turned north, and was steaming towards them when we came across *Nestor*, which was also steaming in the same direction but at a reduced speed. I eased down near her and steamed alongside her for a few moments; she had obviously been hit, but there did not seem to be anything I could do for her then. About this time I caught my first sight of the German Battle Fleet coming up, bearing about south-east from us, and I can remember a long line of grey ships.





A DIVISION OF DESTROYERS AWAITING THE ORDER TO ATTACK.

[To face page 30.





After leaving *Nestor*, we came across a huge patch of oil fuel on the sea, and H.M.S. *Landrail*<sup>1</sup> stopped near by with a whaler down picking up men. We also stopped on the edge of this patch and picked up one man who was swimming about; when we got him on board we learnt that he was the Captain of the after-turret of the *Queen Mary*.<sup>2</sup> We then noticed in the middle of this patch of oil that there was just showing a portion of the bilge of a ship, which was floating about a foot out of the water.

*Petard* then proceeded and, passing through the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, gradually passed up the port side of the 5th Battle Squadron, and eventually regained our flotilla astern of *Champion*. At this time I thought the German shooting was very bad, as a great number of rounds seemed to be falling anything up to 3,000 yards over the 5th B.S. . . .

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### Narrative of H.M.S. "Nicator."

Which attacked the German Line with H.M.S. "Nestor" and "Nomad."

We led out from the head of our battle cruiser line steering a south south-easterly course (the course of the two battle cruisers' lines being approximately south) at a speed of 34 knots, but shortly after the attack started *Nomad* commenced to drop behind and told us to take station ahead of her, as she could not maintain the pace.

Almost simultaneously with our attack we saw enemy destroyers coming out from the head of the German line, either to deliver a counter attack on our battle cruisers or else to beat off our attack. When we had reached a position on the enemy's bow we turned on to our attacking course, roughly north-east, and fired our first torpedo at about 9,000 to 10,000 yards' range. We were in excellent position and the torpedo, for as far as we could see its track, ran straight and doubtless at least crossed the enemy line. By this time we were within gun range of the enemy destroyers, of which we could count at least eight. They were approaching at about 30 knots, two to three points off our starboard bow, and the rate at which we were closing each other was about 1,000 yards per minute, so that it was not long before we went into "rapid independent," our maximum rate of fire, and scored a gratifying number of hits. When at about 1,000 yards' range from us the German destroyers turned on to a south-westerly course, a practically parallel and opposite course to ours, and slightly closing.

We noticed that two of them did not turn with the others but remained stopped, one with a distinct list to starboard, whilst the firing of the remainder although very rapid was very wild, and we were not hit at all. They were now passing us at full speed at almost point-blank

<sup>1</sup> More probably the *Laurel*, a destroyer of the same class as *Landrail*.

<sup>2</sup> Petty Officer E. Francis, whose narrative is on pages 20-25.

range, so that we were allowing the maximum deflection on the gun sights—60 knots right. This did not last long, as they were soon past us, and they turned to rejoin their battle cruisers, being engaged as they did so by the next division of our flotilla, which were following us up astern; but the Germans had left behind three of their destroyers, the crew of one of which were already taking to the boats.<sup>1</sup> The *Nomad* astern of us was unfortunately disabled by a hit in her engine-room, and we had to leave her.

An unfortunate accident happened to our second torpedo, for when fired it hung up half out of the tube and broke at the joint between the head and the body, the top body screws breaking but the bottom ones holding, so that the business end, with all the explosive in it, was dangling over the side. I have vivid recollections of the tubes' crew gingerly trying to bear the head off with a boat-hook as it bumped against the side with each roll of the ship. Luckily, it soon parted and fell off, again luckily just clearing the starboard propeller. Altogether a most unfortunate incident!

All this time we were under an unpleasantly hot fire from the German battle cruisers' secondary armament, and it seemed nothing short of a miracle that we escaped being hit. I put it down unhesitatingly to the way in which the Captain handled the ship, and I think everyone else on board thought that too. His idea was, and it undoubtedly saved us, to chase each salvo—that is to say, when a salvo fell short he would alter course to starboard towards it, so that after the Germans had applied an "up" spotting correction and fired another salvo, instead of hitting us it would go over. Then we would alter to port towards where that salvo fell, and so on. Luckily we had a reserve of speed over the *Nestor*, our next ahead, so we were able to do this salvo dodging without dropping astern of station to any appreciable extent. Throughout the whole action the Captain was leaning coolly against the front of the bridge, smoking his pipe, and giving his orders to the helmsman.

By this time the German battle cruisers had turned 16 points to port. At the time we vaguely thought it was to prevent further attacks from the other divisions following us up astern, but we soon realised it was because they had effected a junction with their battle fleet, so as soon as it was seen that it was no use carrying on and chasing the enemy battle cruisers from astern, *Nestor* turned back to the west and prepared to rejoin our line.

On the way back we passed *Nomad*, stopped and apparently helpless, and we asked if we could offer any assistance but she told us to go on.

Attack on  
German  
Battle Fleet.  
About 5.0 p.m.

Now it was for the first time that I realised that the German battle cruisers had come into touch with their battle fleet, because sighting a line of battleships on our port bow, I exclaimed to the Captain, "Now we're all right, here is the 5th Battle Squadron." But that moment of elation did not last long, because a closer inspection showed they were undoubtedly Germans,

<sup>1</sup> Probably only two German Destroyers were actually sunk as a result of this fighting.—*Ed.*



and, what was more, *Nestor* was converging to attack them. Very soon we were again in the thick of a perfectly hair-raising bombardment from their secondary armament. We were engaging a light cruiser at the head of the line with all our guns, the range on the sights being 3,000 yards—*Nestor* was apparently going to make quite certain of his attack. At this moment, just as our sights were coming on to an enemy battleship for our last torpedo, *Nestor* was hit, and we had to put our helm hard-a-port to prevent ramming him. Our torpedo gunner made frantic efforts to train the torpedo tube round to keep his sights on, but the ship was swinging so rapidly that he could not do it, and unfortunately the Captain did not realise until afterwards that the torpedo had never been fired. The *Nestor*, realising that he was out of action ordered us to rejoin *Champion*, for apparently our recall had been hoisted for some time, and accordingly we turned and rejoined *Champion* at full speed. It seemed perfectly extraordinary that, in spite of the tornado of shells that were falling all round us, we were never hit once except by a few splinters.

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### Loss of H.M.S. "Nestor" and "Nomad."

*H.M.S. "Nestor" and H.M.S. "Nomad" were sunk by the concentrated fire of the German High Seas Fleet. Their end was gallant. Damaged in their attack on the German battle cruisers, they were both lying stopped unable to steam in the track of the German High Seas Fleet as the latter "came up in an apparently endless procession from the south, apparently about 20 capital ships with light cruisers and masses of destroyers." There was no possible reply for two destroyers to the broadsides of a dozen super-Dreadnoughts. "A whole German battle squadron," an officer of "Nomad" wrote, "was apparently using us as a target for a practice firing, and the 'Nomad' was rapidly being turned into something remarkably like a Gruyere cheese." But before they were put down "Nestor" and "Nomad" fired their torpedoes. "We were about 2,000 yards, as far as I can remember, from the leading German battleship when we fired the last torpedo, and so we were at practically point-blank range for their 11-inch and 12-inch guns. The ship then started sinking by the stern with a great rattle from the loose gear tumbling about in her, and then gradually disappeared, but all the men were got clear just before she sank, and after a short swim in the sea a life-saving apparatus in the form of a German torpedo boat, so small that we could almost have taken it on with our fists, came up and picked us up out of the water. She was a single-funnel craft, with one pop-gun on the foc'sle, one torpedo tube mounted on rails, and her decks piled high with coal. However, one doesn't look a gift horse in the mouth, and in her we were taken back to Germany, and, as you probably know, we were the 'Kaiser's guests' there for the next two and a half years!"*

*The Commanding Officer of H.M.S. "Nestor," Commander the Hon. Barry Bingham, V.C., gives a similar description of the situation :—*<sup>1</sup>

*"While lying helpless and broken down, we saw the opposing forces of battle cruisers retracing their tracks to the north-west fighting on parallel courses. The rival squadrons quickly disappeared behind the horizon, engaged furiously, and we were now left with the ocean to ourselves. But it was not to be for long. Fifteen minutes later my yeoman-of-signals reported, 'German battleships on the horizon, shaping course in our direction.' This was more than I had ever bargained for, and, using my own glasses, I was dumb-founded to see that it was in truth the main body of the German High Sea Fleet, steaming at top speed in a N.W. direction, and following the wake of their own battle cruisers.*

*"Their course necessarily led them first past the 'Nomad,' and in another ten minutes the slaughter began. They literally smothered the destroyer with salvoes. Of my divisional mate nothing could be seen: great columns of spray and smoke alone gave an indication of her whereabouts. I shall never forget the sight, and mercifully it was a matter of a few minutes before the ship sank; at the same time it seemed impossible that anyone on board could have survived.*

*"Of what was in store for us there was not now the vestige of a doubt, and the problem was how to keep all hands occupied for the few minutes that remained before the crash must come.*

*"While the sub-lieutenant and myself were 'ditching' all charts, confidential books, and documents, the first lieutenant and the men were executing my order in providing biscuits and water for the boats, lowering these to the water's edge, hoisting out Carley floats, and generally preparing for the moment when we should be obliged to leave the ship.*

*"These orders were rapidly executed, and there was still time on our hands, for nothing had as yet happened. By a brilliant inspiration, Bethell<sup>2</sup> then suggested to me that the cables might be ranged on deck—ostensibly for use in case of a friendly tow, but in reality to keep the men busy to the last. This suggestion I readily accepted, and the hands were still thus employed when the end came.*

*"From a distance of about five miles the Germans commenced with their secondary armament, and very soon we were enveloped in a deluge of shell fire. Any reply from our own guns was absolutely out of the question at a range beyond the possibilities of our light shells; to have answered any one of our numerous assailants would have been as effective as the use of a pea-shooter against a wall of steel. Just about this time we fired our last torpedo at the High Sea Fleet, and it was seen to run well.*

*"It was a matter of two or three minutes only before the 'Nestor,' enveloped in a cloud of smoke and spray, the centre of a whirlwind of shrieking*

<sup>1</sup> Extract from "Falklands, Jutland, and the Bight," by Commander BINGHAM, V.C. (John Murray, London, 1919.)

<sup>2</sup> Lieut. M. J. Bethell, 1st Lieutenant of H.M.S. *Nestor*.



"shells, received not a few heavy and vital hits, and the ship began slowly to settle by the stern, and then to take up a heavy list to starboard.

"Her decks now showed the first signs of havoc amongst life and limb.

"It was clear that the doomed 'Nestor' was sinking rapidly, and at that moment I gave my last order as her commander—'Abandon ship.'

"The motor boat and Carley floats were quickly filled, and as the dinghy was badly broken up by shell-fire, there seemed to remain for me only the possibility of a place in the whaler.

"Bethell was standing beside me, and I turned to him with the question, 'Now, where shall we go?' His answer was only characteristic of that gallant spirit, 'To Heaven, I trust, sir.'

"At that moment he turned aside to attend to a mortally wounded signal-man, and was seen no more amidst a cloud of fumes from a bursting shell.

"I clambered into the whaler, where I found about eight others waiting, and we remained alongside until the last possible moment, hailing the partially-submerged ship vigorously, in the unlikely event of any survivors being still on board. Finally we pushed off clear.

"The whaler, however, had also been hit, probably at the same time as the dinghy, and before we had gone half a dozen strokes she filled and sank. We then struck out, I luckily having my 'Miranda' life-saving waistcoat on, for the well-loaded motor boat, lying some fifty yards ahead of the 'Nestor,' where some of us were pulled in, the rest supporting themselves by holding on to the gunwale.

"Looking now towards the 'Nestor,' we saw the water lapping over the decks, and the forecastle high in the air, still the target of the German gunlayers, some of whose projectiles fell uncomfortably near us in the motor boat and rafts.

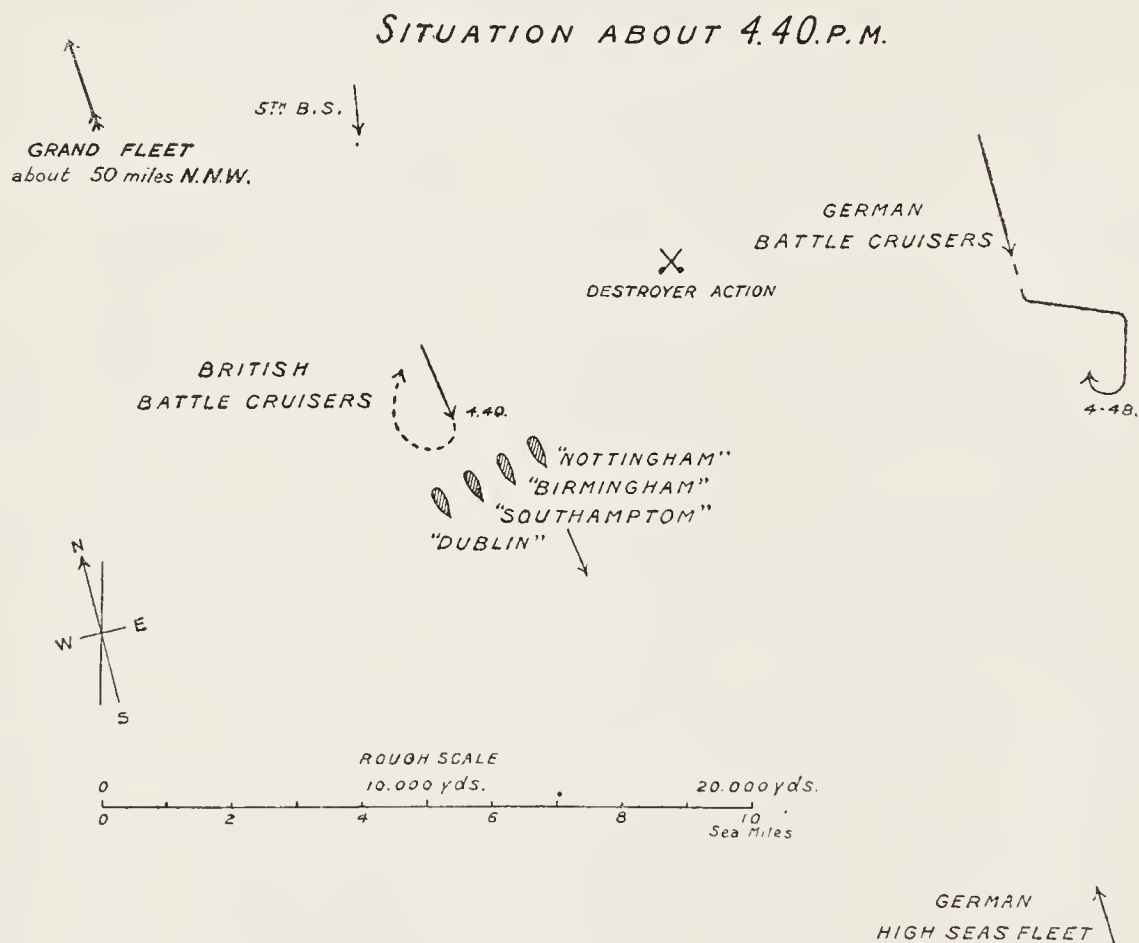
"In about three minutes the destroyer suddenly raised herself into an absolutely perpendicular position, and thus slid down, stern first, to the bottom of the North Sea, leaving a quantity of oil and wreckage to mark the spot where she had last rested."

## Sighting the High Seas Fleet.

The end of "Nestor" and "Nomad" came about 5.30 p.m. Nearly an hour before this, at 4.35 p.m., the smoke and then the distant silhouette of the leading ships of the German Battle Fleet had been sighted from light cruisers which were scouting ahead of the "Lion" and our other battle cruisers, and a report was immediately made to the Vice-Admiral:—

"Southampton" to C.-in-C. and S.O., B.C.F.

"Urgent. Priority. Have sighted enemy Battle Fleet bearing approximately S.E., course of enemy North. My position Lat.  $56^{\circ} 34' N.$ , Long.  $6^{\circ} 20' E.$ " Time, 16.38."



An Officer in the Conning Tower of H.M.S. "Southampton" described the event:—

"At 4.38 p.m. we sighted ahead the entire German High Seas Fleet coming up in an apparently endless procession from the south, about 20 capital

*"ships with light cruisers and masses of destroyers. The men in our spotting top, with the exception of the Gunnery Lieutenant who knew better, were convinced that the new arrivals were the British Grand Fleet, regardless of the fact that the ships were approaching from the direction of Heligoland, and it took the Gunnery Lieutenant some little time to cure their optimism. 'Lion' then turned 16 points."*

*The sighting of the German Battle Fleet was one of the most important events of Jutland. Our battle cruisers could now no longer hope to cut off the German battle cruisers from their base. The boot was on the other leg, and our force had now become inferior to the German force, for battle cruisers cannot stand up in a daylight duel against battleships, which are much more heavily armoured vessels, and the Germans were now also numerically superior. Our battle cruisers had, therefore, immediately to change their line of advance. At 4.45 Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty turned "right about," and led his four remaining battle cruisers to the northward. The intention now was to steam to the northward towards our Grand Fleet, enticing the German Battle Fleet to follow until they could be drawn into contact with the British Battle Fleet, now roughly 50 miles to the northward.*

*Vice-Admiral Beatty in his report described the period as follows :—*

*"At 4.38 p.m. 'Southampton' reported the enemy's Battle Fleet ahead. The destroyers were recalled, and at 4.42 p.m. the enemy's Battle Fleet was sighted S.E. Course was altered 16 points in succession to starboard, and I proceeded on a northerly course to lead them towards the Grand Fleet. The enemy battle cruisers altered course shortly afterwards, and the action continued. 'Southampton,' with the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, held to the southward to observe. They closed to within 13,000 yards of the enemy Battle Fleet, and came under a very heavy but ineffective fire. 'Southampton's' reports were most valuable."*

*(V.A., B.C.F.'s Despatch).*

## Narrative of an Officer on the Fore Bridge of H.M.S. "Nottingham" (2nd L.C.S.).

..... Up till now, about 4.30 p.m., although actually nearer to the enemy than were our battle cruisers we had not been fired at as the enemy had bigger fry than us to play with, and we had not fired as they were out of range of our 6-inch guns. But very soon some enemy destroyers showed signs of coming across to attack our battle cruisers, and here our gun-layers got an innings and we had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy boats hit, and the attack turned back. The worst half-hour of the day



was now over (4.30 p.m.), and the 5th Battle Squadron with their 15-inch guns were already in the line astern of the battle cruisers, and beginning to make their weight felt.

But to return to the *Nottingham*; we were still about 1,500 yards ahead of our battle cruisers and roughly 13,000 yards from the enemy, when suddenly out of the mist on the port bow a line of big ships appeared. We stood on towards the enemy with the *Southampton* and the rest of our squadron to diagnose the newcomers, so as to be able to tell the Commander-in-Chief and the *Lion* exactly who was there. Soon there was no mistaking that they were the enemy Battle Fleet, and so about 4.45 we turned and followed after our big ships.



THE HIGH SEAS FLEET.

It was perhaps as well that we turned when we did, or we should probably never have got away again. We fired some long-range torpedoes at the enemy line, but, needless to say, we did not wait to see if they hit.<sup>1</sup> For the next three-quarters of an hour the German Battle Fleet had nothing to do but fire at us of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron—which they proceeded to do. We must have stood out clearly for them against the western sky, but their shooting was so correct for elevation that with the assistance of Providence, it was not difficult to dodge the salvos. For example, a salvo of four 11-inch shells would fall say, 200 yards over, all in a bunch as they invariably did, so that if one shell had hit us probably all would have hit. Then the next salvo would fall only 100 yards over, and the next—well, obviously something had to be done about it, or the next salvo would fall on us; there was about forty-five seconds to do it in. A little helm put on quickly and an alteration of about 20 degrees towards the last salvo, this the German would not notice and so would not allow for, and having seen his last shot fall over he would come down in his range 100 yards, and the next salvo would fall where we *had* been, but now about

<sup>1</sup> We have since been told by the post-battle umpires that our torpedo is considered to have hit.



4.37 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

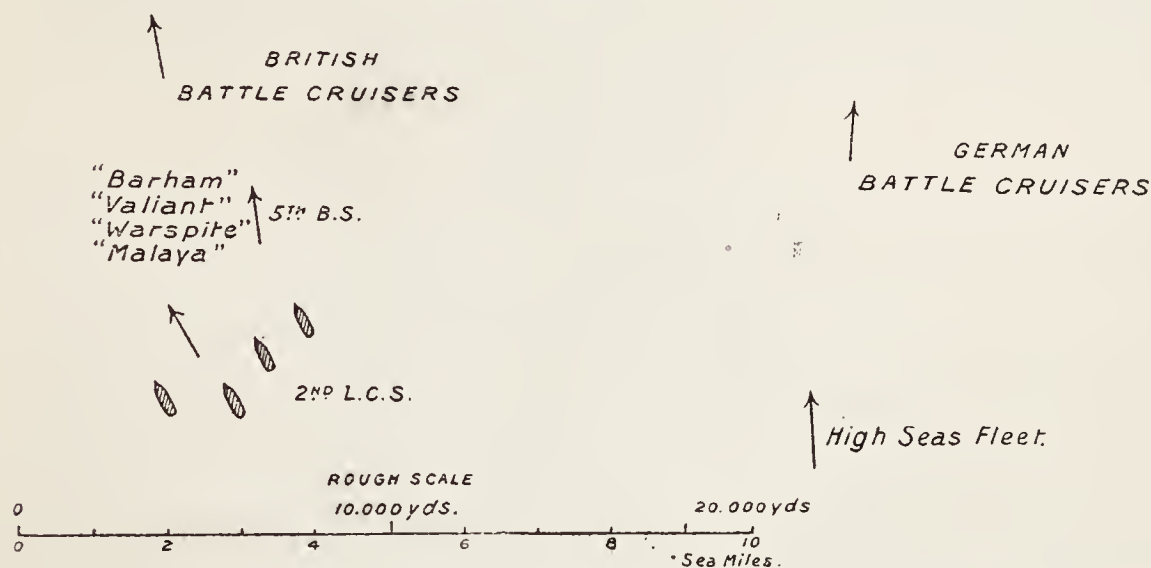
Narrative from H.M.S. "Nottingham."

50 or 100 yards short of us. Salvo after salvo we were able to dodge in this way, and although I think one may say that the man who says he enjoys a naval battle on the whole is well,—not exactly accurate, I must confess that I never had a more interesting and, in a way, really amusing half-hour than I had conning the ship at that time.

Of course, it was no good us engaging battleships with our little 6-inch guns at 15,000 yards' range, and so, having reported the enemy, the only thing we could do was to get away as quickly as possible. Shells sometimes burst close to the ship and sent great fountains of water up the height of the mast—others would burst 100 yards short, and all the pieces would come hurtling over our heads, some hitting the ship; but we had no casualties. At times the sun would come out for a few minutes and light up the Hun out of the mist, and also dazzle him, with the result that we got some long-range shots in at him whilst he left us alone, but for the greater part of the

### *SITUATION ABOUT 5.0 P.M.*

*Position of Squadrons is only approximate.*



time we were under the enemy's fire and not replying ourselves. All this time we were, needless to say, going full speed, and with the whole German main fleet following it is fortunate that nothing went wrong down in the engine-room.

When we turned to the north at 4.48, after reporting the German Battle Fleet, we were the unwilling and helpless witnesses of two of our destroyers which had taken part in a very fine attack on the German battle cruisers and had been winged in doing so, and when the battle cruisers turned to the north these two destroyers had to be left to fall right into the jaws of the German Battle Fleet. The Germans in this case picked up their crews, but only after the ships were sunk. . . .

## Narrative from H.M.S. "Southampton" (2nd L.C.S.).

Extract from "A Naval Lieutenant, 1914-1918," by "Etienne."<sup>1</sup>

At 4.38 a very startling development took place. We suddenly saw and reported light cruisers, followed by the High Seas Fleet, bearing south-east. Sir David Beatty at once signalled to the Battle Cruiser Force to alter course 16 points (180°) in succession. The German battle cruisers were doing the same thing at the same moment.

We disobeyed the signal, or rather delayed obeying it, for two reasons—firstly, we wished to get close enough to the High Seas Fleet to examine them and report accurately on their composition and disposition; secondly, we had hopes of delivering a torpedo attack on the long crescent-shaped line of heavy ships which was stretched round on our port bow.



It was a strain steaming at 25 knots straight for this formidable line of battleships, with our own friends going fast away from us in the opposite direction. As we got closer I counted sixteen or seventeen battleships, with the four *König* class in the van, and the six older pre-Dreadnoughts in the rear. Seconds became minutes, and still they did not open fire, though every second I expected to see a sheet of flame ripple down their sides, and a hail of shell fall around us. I can only account for this strange inactivity on their part by the theory that, as they only saw us end on and we were steering

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of the author and the publishers, Messrs. Methuen & Co.,  
36 Essex Street, London, W.C.





"BIRMINGHAM" WITH A LARGE SALVO FALLING CLOSE TO HER.



"Lion" Turning.

"Princess Royal" Straddled.  
(Head on to Camera.)

Destroyer.

BATTLE CRUISER FORCE TURNING FROM SOUTH TO NORTH ON SIGHTING  
THE HIGH SEAS FLEET.

[To face page 40.





4.37 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Narrative from H.M.S. "Southampton."

on opposite courses to the remaining British ships, they assumed we were a German light cruiser squadron that had been running away from the British battle cruisers. Only in this manner can I account for the strange fact that they allowed us to get within 13,000 yards of their line without ever firing a shot at us.

This theory is supported by the fact that when at 4.45 the calm voice of Petty-Officer Barnes on the foremost rangefinder intoned, "Range, one, three, five double ho! Range one, three, two, double ho!" the Commodore saw that we could not get into a position for a torpedo attack, and as we would be lucky if we got out of the place we were then in, he gave the order for the turning signal, which had been flying for five minutes, to be hauled down.

Over went the helms, and the four ships slewed round, bringing our sterns to the enemy. As we turned, the fun began, and half a dozen German battleships opened a deliberate fire on the squadron.

My action station was aft, but I could hear everything that passed on the fore-bridge as I was in direct communication by voice-pipe. I heard the imperturbable Petty-Officer Barnes continuing his range-taking—"Range one, three, two, double ho! Range one, double three, double ho!" Crash! Bang! Whiz-z-z! and a salvo crumped down around us, the fragments whistling and sobbing overhead. Suddenly I heard Petty-Officer Barnes say, with evident satisfaction, "Range hobscored!" I took a general look round, and the situation was as follows:—

About three or four miles north of us our battle cruisers were steaming along making a good deal of smoke and firing steadily at what I imagined to be the German battle cruisers' distant hulls on our starboard bow. Then came a gap of two miles, between the battle cruisers and the 5th Battle Squadron. These latter four ships had passed the battle cruisers on opposite courses when Sir David Beatty turned north, and as soon as they had passed them, Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas had turned his squadron to north by west, and followed up the battle cruisers. Whilst this was going on we (Second Light Cruiser Squadron) had still been going south. When we turned to north, we found ourselves about a mile behind the last ship of the Fifth Battle Squadron. . . .

The Fifth B.S. were a brave sight. They were receiving the concentrated fire of some twelve German heavy ships but it did not seem to be worrying them, and though I saw several shells hit the *Warspite*, just ahead of us, the German shooting did not impress me very favourably. But our own position was not pleasant. The half-dozen older battleships at the tail of the German line were too far away to fire at the Fifth Battle Squadron, and though we had gradually drawn out to 15,000 or 16,000 yards we were inside their range, and they began to do a sort of target practice in slow-time on our squadron.

I was in the after control with half a dozen men, the Sub. and the Clerk. We crouched down behind the tenth of an inch plating and ate bully beef,

## CHAPTER IV.

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### Experiences in Turrets and Between Decks.

“All the hands behaved as you would have wished.”

—Captain Edward Berry to Rear-Admiral Horatio Nelson, Battle of the Nile, 1798.

*Whilst a naval action is taking its course in the way of squadron manœuvres, gunnery concentrations or delivery of torpedo attacks, the large majority of the men of each ship are occupied in carrying out the will of the Admirals and Captains of the Fleet, without actually themselves seeing anything of the enemy.*

*The men in the turrets—and the crew of each turret amounts on an average to 60 or 70 men—the men between decks stationed for secondary ammunition supply or as fire and repair parties, and all the engineering complement of the ship stationed in the engine-rooms and in the boiler-rooms, are all carrying on with their work, hearing the noise of the enemy's shells as they splash in the water near the ship, hearing the noise of their own turrets firing, hearing occasionally the noise of an enemy shell hitting the ship, but neither seeing the enemy whom they are fighting nor knowing the detail results of their work. Certain small scraps of news circulate round the ship—“the news that the Grand Fleet had been sighted right ahead spread round the ship like wildfire,”—and certain deductions can be made from orders that are given, orders for increase of speed, for firing torpedoes, for manning anti-torpedo boat armament, for “Range 14,200, 2nd battle cruiser from the left, on fire aft—rapid fire,” etc. But it remains a fact that the majority of the men fighting a modern naval battle are not aware at the time of what is happening, who is winning, or whether other ships than their own are being damaged or not.<sup>1</sup>*

*The following accounts therefore of events in turrets, engine-rooms, and torpedo control positions, although apparently somewhat technical, will probably help the reader to reproduce in his imagination the surroundings and the atmosphere of the men who were fighting the action of Jutland. It must always be remembered that it was the majority who were fighting under these conditions of between decks, and only the minority who were in positions above decks able to see the movements of ships.*

*The accounts will also confirm what other experiences of 1914-18 have taught us, that the horrors and humours of war go hand in hand with the glory of war—such as there is of glory.*

<sup>1</sup> Humour, also, becomes mixed up with the confusion of battle. For example:—“At 5.46 fire was once more opened on a battle cruiser; two were in sight and we engaged the second. This was probably the time when the Paymaster, who had come on deck for some fresh air and a look round, lost his trousers. He was standing on the fore superstructure when ‘P’ turret opened fire and deprived him by its blast of his very necessary garment. Deeney demanded an immediate retreat. . . . .”

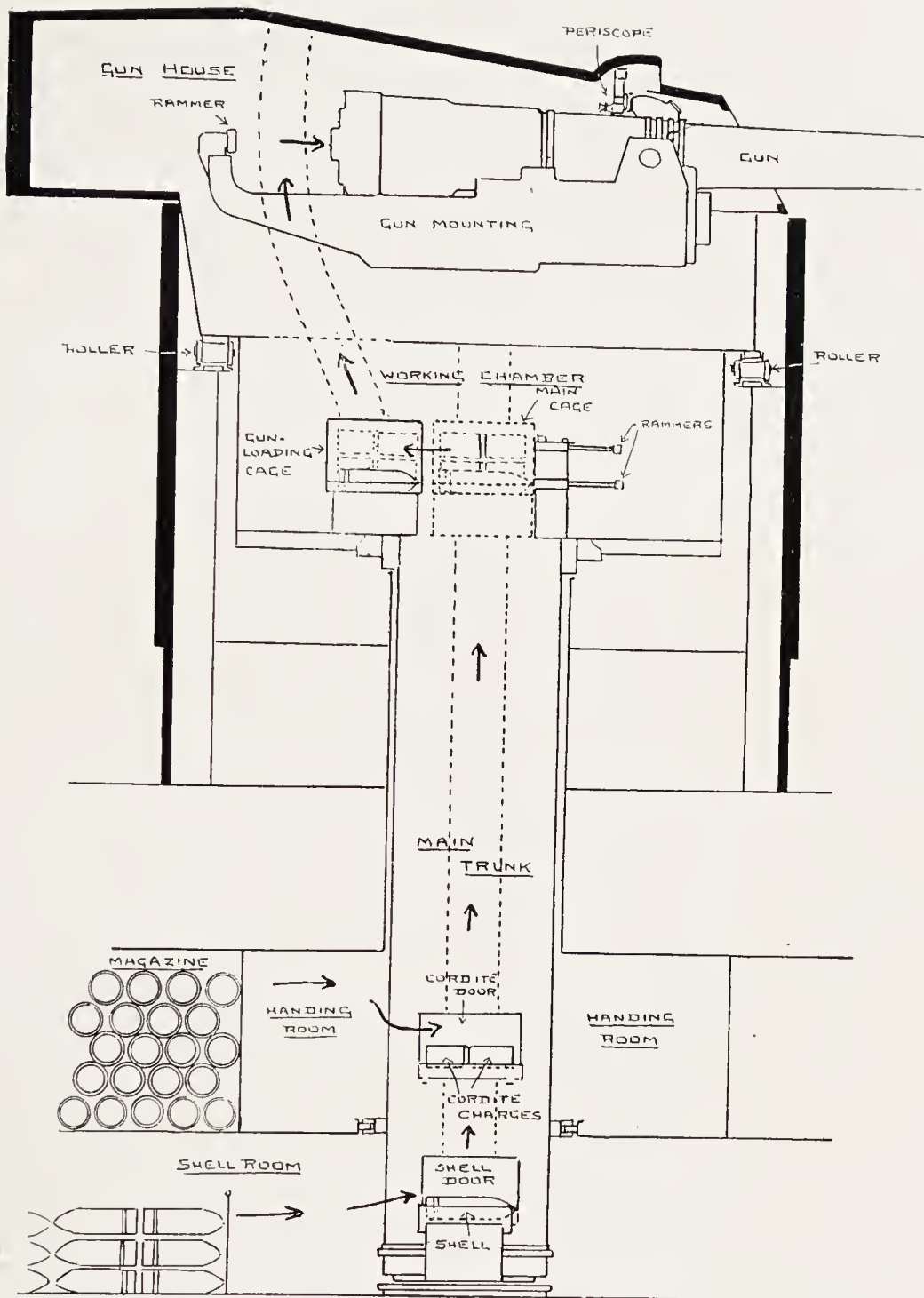


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RELATIVE POSITIONS  
OF THE VARIOUS COMPARTMENTS OF A TURRET.

[To face page 44.





## Cordite Fire in "Q" Turret, H.M.S. "Lion."

*This description of events was written by the Gunnery Officer of H.M.S. "Lion." He obtained the details after the action from the evidence of the two men who were the only survivors of the turret's crew.*

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As the indirect result of a German shell penetrating the roof of the turret, 10 minutes after the action started, a cordite fire occurred in "Q" turret which nearly resulted in the magazine and so the ship blowing up.

It appears that all the occupants of the gun-house proper, most of the silent-cabinet's crew, and most of the working chamber's crew situated directly below the gun-house, were killed or severely wounded by the detonation of this shell in the gun-house. The Officer of the Turret, though himself severely wounded, realised that his turret was out of action and on fire, and also that the fire might reach the magazine. He accordingly passed his orders by the direct-voice pipe down to the handing-room below, to close the magazine doors and open the magazine flood valves. This order was promptly carried out, and did in fact prevent the flash from the cordite charges reaching the magazines, and so the ship from being blown up. After giving his orders to the handing-room the Officer of the Turret sent his Sergeant, who although very badly burnt and wounded was conscious and capable of movement, to make a personal report to the Captain to the effect that the turret was definitely out of action, and that the flooding of the magazine had been ordered. The Sergeant succeeded in clambering to the bridge and made his report. There were only two others of the turret's crew who escaped with their lives. . . . . The damage and loss of life caused by the actual explosion of the German shell did not extend to the magazine handing-room and shell-room crews, none of whom were wounded, but unfortunately all of them lost their lives through the cordite fire which followed a few minutes afterwards.

An inspection of the "state" in the turret, as soon after the action as was possible, indicated that this serious cordite fire originated in a curious way. The lever which controls the working of the left breech was blown to the rear, *i.e.*, in the direction "open the breech," and accordingly the breech opened. The gun was loaded, and the shell in the gun being unseated by the shock of the hit slid down towards the breech, falling, with its cordite charge, down into the well which is in rear of the breech, and up which ammunition is supplied. The projectile and a half-burnt powder igniter from the cordite charge were found here afterwards. The burst of the enemy shell had started a fire in the gun-house, probably of men's clothing, or in fact of any inflammable material, and this must have reached down to the naked charge of cordite lying in the gun-well. This

cordite caught fire and, burning, passed the ignition to cordite which was waiting in both gun-loading cages, and so down the main ammunition supply trunk. The resulting flash is that shown in the photograph (facing this page), as it took its easiest course to escape—namely, upwards through the roof of the turret by the hole made by the enemy shell-burst.

The flash also passed down the main trunk into the shell-room and handing-room, and up the escape trunk into the switchboard compartment. In this latter compartment were stationed, besides the switchboard men and certain of the electrical repair party, the after medical party under the charge of a surgeon. All these men, together with the magazine and shell-room crews, were killed by the cordite fire. It is to be remarked that the clothes and bodies of these men were not burnt, and in cases where the hands had been raised involuntarily, palms forward, to protect the eyes, the backs of the hands and that part of the face actually screened by the hands were not even discoloured. Death to these men must have been instantaneous.

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## Point of View of a Medical Officer.

Narrative from the Medical Officer of H.M.S. "Princess Royal."

In all the battle cruisers there are two main "Dressing Stations," one in the fore and the other in the after end of the ship. The fore dressing station is below the main deck, and is surrounded by about 9 inches of armour, and here the majority of instruments and dressings are kept, since it is the most protected and convenient locality for operations.

In size about 10 feet by 15 feet, there were two bunks against one bulkhead, or wall, of the station for bad cases; a small medical store-room adjoined one corner, and a folding operating table, with another small table for the tray holding the instruments, was rigged in the centre of the station. The Surgeon-Commander was stationed here with a party of ten hands, which included the stretcher party. A similar party under the next senior surgeon was stationed in the after dressing station, which was aft on the port side of the mess deck unprotected by armour, but possessing the advantages of accessibility, an X-ray apparatus, and hot water led to it.

The first-aid party, all told, was about thirty strong—three medical officers, the chaplain, five sick berth ratings, and about twenty ship's police, cooks, stewards, and writer ratings, who were trained in first-aid duties but had no skilled medical knowledge. Each turret had two of the first-aid party, with a supply of tourniquets, bandages, and simple dressings.





Flames Higher than Mast.

CORDITE FLAME SHOOTING OUT OF PIERCED ROOF OF "Q" TURRET, "LION."

Taken from H.M.S. "Lydiard," about 4.8 p.m.

[To face page 46.





As all our main arrangements had been completed shortly after the outbreak of war, and were left always ready for action, there remained little to be done on going to action stations, except to muster the first-aid parties, test communications, and see that the instruments, stretchers, etc., were ready.

About 2.30 p.m. it first became generally known on board us that enemy light cruisers had been reported, and that a seaplane had been sent up to examine them, and we then immediately went to "action stations."

After seeing everything correct, I went on deck to try and see what was happening. With glasses it was easy to make out five large enemy ships on our port bow, and away on our port quarter, but apparently much further off, were our own 5th B.S. Shortly afterwards the enemy opened fire, and I saw two distinct salvoes fired, but was quite unable to see where the shell pitched. I then returned to the foremost dressing station, and not many minutes seemed to elapse before a terrific crash was felt, and several of the party made a somewhat violent acquaintance with the deck. All lights were immediately extinguished which led to some confusion in the sudden darkness. After lighting two oil lamps which were kept for emergencies, and taking a look round, we found only one casualty amongst the party, this a fairly large scalp wound but whether from a fall or from a fragment of shell I do not know. Probably the latter, as next day about 3 lbs. weight of shell fragments from an 11- or 12-inch shell were swept up from the deck of the station.

The light from the oil lamps was very poor, and vision was further obscured by the heavy whitish fumes which began to descend into the compartment, and which could not be cleared away as the ventilation fans were always, by order, shut off in action, owing to the danger of flooding compartments below the water level. The atmosphere became very unpleasant, the fumes being irritating to eyes and throat. The gauze respirators in use at that time (1916) were ordered to be put on, and were distinctly useful for a time, but later on the atmosphere became so unbearable that I sent a message to the Flag Captain asking for permission to take up our stations on the port side of the foremost 4-inch battery, situated on the upper deck under the forecastle. Whilst waiting for permission, the first-aid party dressed casualties as they occurred.

Not much work was entailed by the change of station, as only dressings in first-aid bags were taken up to the battery, everything else being left in the dressing station, as we hoped to return there later (which we did). In the battery we dressed several cases, chiefly of burns occurring amongst members of the fire and repair parties—parties which appear to me to have perhaps the most exposed and dangerous job of any in action; they certainly did wonderful work under their respective officers, and I am afraid they suffered many casualties. After shifting our station it was possible to gather roughly that a shell had entered

through the Admiral's pantry and exploded in the Admiral's port cabin, blowing away a respectable portion of the deck at its after end, and it was evidently fragments of this shell which had found their way down the hatchway into the dressing station.

In the meantime other casualties began to arrive, and amongst them a gun-layer from the after turret, which had been put out of action by a direct hit. He, poor fellow, had a foot nearly blown away, but had been very skilfully dealt with by the first-aid party in the turret and carried in a stretcher to us from right aft. This gun-layer had developed German measles about two days previously, and should by rights have been landed, but owing to the mildness of his complaint, and because he was an important rating, he had been kept isolated on board and permitted to come to sea. Later on I amputated his leg, from which he ultimately made a good recovery, and he is, I believe, still serving.

The atmospheric conditions in the fore dressing station having improved and several cases requiring operative treatment, we proceeded to get them down from the 4-inch battery back to the station. We were still without electric light and the oil lamps were very poor, so this fact and the uncertainty of what was likely to happen in the immediate future made me hesitate to start operating at once: moreover, assistance was required to give an anæsthetic. So I despatched a message to the surgeon stationed in the turret shell-room to join me in the fore dressing station. In the meantime I decided to visit the after dressing station, where the 2nd surgeon was stationed, to see how they were faring there. I found them very busy amongst casualties—chiefly burns, but also some serious wounds from a shell which had penetrated the upper deck in rear of the mid-ship turret on the port side. The surgeon himself and several of the party had been knocked down by the explosion and were suffering from concussion, but were all carrying on.

On returning to the fore station I found that the surgeon had arrived, so I proceeded to operate on a Blue Marine<sup>1</sup> who had been brought down bleeding seriously from a punctured wound of the face. As the light was still very bad, one of the first-aid party, who, besides previous experience at Heligoland and Dogger Bank, had been present at the Bombardment of Alexandria in 1882, volunteered to assist. He was a stout fellow, and of great value in keeping up the spirits of everyone. I always remember him saying at Heligoland on 28th August, 1914, when other members of the party were new to this class of entertainment, "Lor' bless you, sir, they fires a lot, but they never 'urts each other!"—this somewhat contemptuous opinion of the gunnery world being based on his experiences at Alexandria.

We had hardly started operating before rapid firing developed, and the tray with all my instruments was deposited on the deck. However, with a fine disregard of modern aseptic principles, we carried on, and having

<sup>1</sup> i.e., A man belonging to the Royal Marine Artillery.

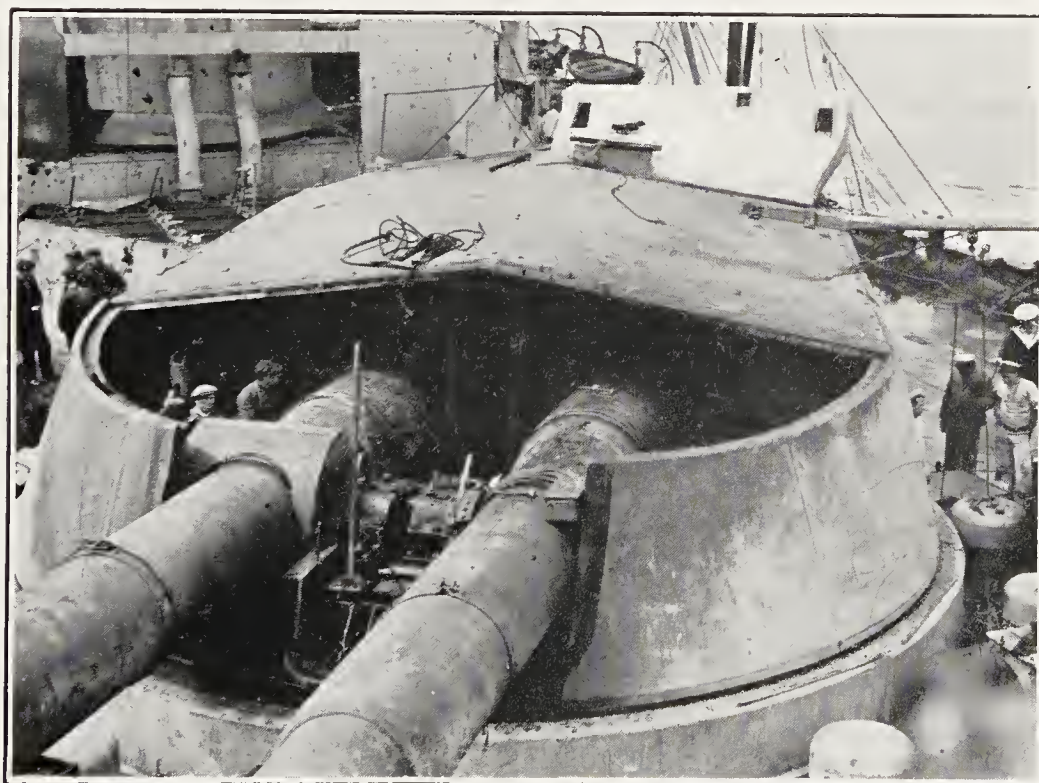




13th Flotilla Destroyers working ahead to attack.

Remainder of Salvo is over and is seen astern.

"LION" BEING HIT ON "Q" TURRET.



DAMAGE TO "Q" TURRET, "LION." Taken in Harbour.





dealt with the above-mentioned marine, proceeded to operate on the gun-layer. The light was most trying, the securing of arteries during the operation being particularly difficult; however, in the middle the electric light was again switched on, and everything then became comparatively easy. The dressing of large numbers of burns, some very extensive ones, now fully occupied the time of the whole staff, and when this was completed and the casualties made as comfortable as possible, hot soup, etc., was supplied.

Most of the wounded, who numbered altogether exactly 100, of which between 70 and 80 were seriously burned or wounded, were collected into two groups; one on the main deck in the lobby outside the Admiral's cabin, and the other on the mess deck aft on the port side, near the after dressing station. They lay on mattresses on the deck, or on bedding laid on mess tables. Two of the men who had been operated upon occupied the two bunks in the fore dressing station, and one or two others were in canvas cots on the deck or on the mess tables. The first-aid party worked hard attending to them, helped by a stoker who was on the sick list at the time of the action, and who afterwards was promoted by the Captain to leading stoker for the valuable assistance he gave to the first-aid party in this action.

About 11 p.m. we had things in fair order, and I was able to go to the ward-room for some food, where I learnt from a naturally somewhat excited group of officers that a signal had been received from the Admiral Commanding Battle Cruisers, saying that we should probably meet the Germans again on the following morning and proceed to annihilate them. As an individual, nothing was more pleasing than the prospect of blowing up as many Huns as possible, but as a medical officer I could not but reflect on what was likely to be the fate of our casualties, now numbering some 100, exposed as they would be in further action.

During the night we steamed slowly south, but at dawn nothing of the Germans was to be seen. During the next day we buried the dead at sea, and arriving in the Forth on the Friday morning, June 2nd, discharged our wounded in about 2½ hours to the hospital ship *Plassey*.

On thinking over the experiences of being in action at Jutland and elsewhere, I have been struck with the distinct manner in which a modern ship in action is divided into two separate worlds; the one stationed in conning tower, control positions, and turrets, directing the actual fighting and movements of the ship; the other between decks in the engine-rooms and stokeholds, in the shell-rooms or magazines, and here and there between decks working as fire parties, repair parties, or first-aid parties, serving, as it were, the other world of the ship.

As far as my experiences go, the one world is much cut off from the other, and nothing impressed itself more on my memory than the absolute absence of authentic news reaching us between decks. At Heligoland and Dogger Bank actions I heard nothing till the action was over. At Jutland the only news was bad news, whispered to me about half-an-hour

after the action had commenced by the Master-at-Arms, who was in my party, that the *Indefatigable* had been sunk, and shortly afterwards that the *Queen Mary* had blown up.

The absence of news and the enforced idleness at the commencement of an action, when one can simply hear the ship firing and neither know what enemy is being engaged nor what course the action is taking, is undoubtedly very trying to all concerned. Later, when work arrives, conditions become easier, though no doubt the sight of maimed individuals is very trying to the non-medical ranks and ratings of the first-aid party.

At Jutland the conduct of all the wounded was splendid. From the large number of severely injured who must have suffered considerable pain and discomfort for at least 48 hours, and who must have realised what a bad time they would have had in the event of further action—not a complaint was heard. I confess to a much greater admiration for all ratings than before the war, and also feel that officers and men were brought much closer to, and had a better understanding of each other after being in action together than they did before—at least this was certainly so in the *Princess Royal*.

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### Narrative of a Gunnery Officer.

Notes on the Battle of Jutland, as seen by the Gunnery Officer of H.M.S. “*Tiger*,”  
1st Battle Cruiser Squadron.

On the afternoon of the 31st May, 1916, the 1st and 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadrons were out on one of the usual weekly cruises towards the Fisher Banks. The 3rd B.C.S. had gone up to Scapa Flow for target practice, and the 5th Battle Squadron had come down to join us in the Forth in their place. It was the first time the 5th B.S. had come out with the battle cruisers from the Forth.

At about 3.30 p.m. we received the signal to prepare for immediate action, and soon afterwards the *Lion* reported enemy battle cruisers in sight to the N.E.

At 3.45 we sighted enemy ships, apparently battle cruisers, five in number, which I estimated to be *Hindenburg*, *Lutzow*, *Derfflinger*, *Seydlitz*, and *Moltke*. (I was wrong; the *Von der Tann*, not the *Hindenburg*, was there). Their bearing was approximately north, on our port bow; the weather was misty in patches, the visibility varying from 12 to 6 miles; wind west, force 3<sup>1</sup>; sea calm. I gave the target as 4th ship from the right. At 3.46 the range-finders gave a first range of 21,300 yards.

At 3.49 the enemy opened fire. The first salvo I saw drop was quite 2,000 yards short of us, and did not seem to have a very small spread. 3.50

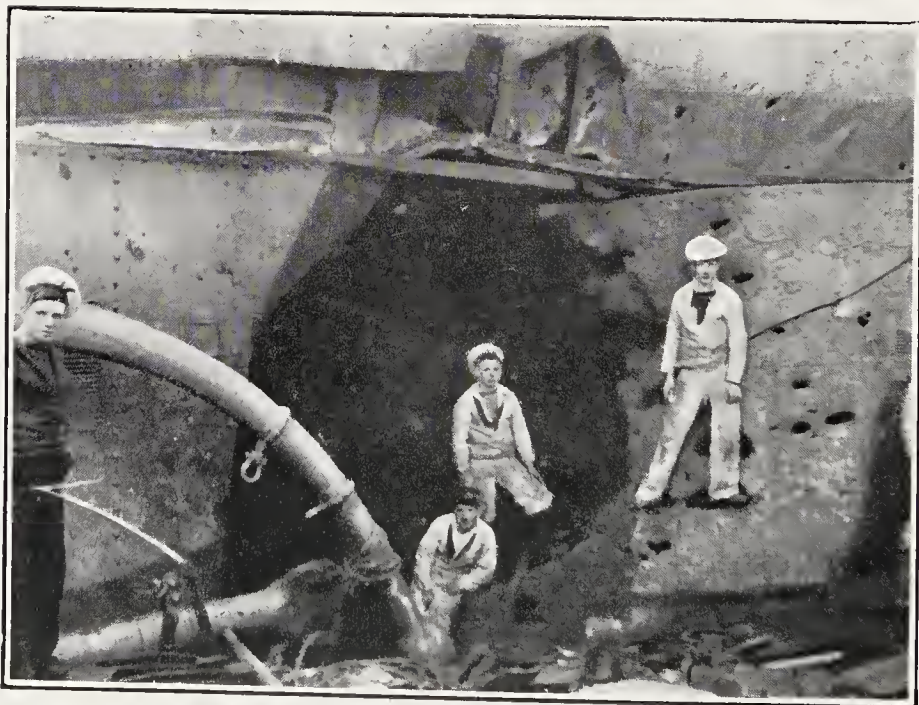
<sup>1</sup> A measure according to the Beaufort scale by which 0 represents a calm and 10 a gale.







DAMAGE TO DECK, "LION."



DAMAGE TO FUNNEL, "LION."



3.50 p.m. to 4.50 p.m.

Gunnery Officer of H.M.S. "Tiger."

*Lion* opened fire, and we opened fire. Target 4th ship from right, range 18,500. Our first salvo missed for deflection, second salvo was over. The submarine screen of destroyers on our engaged bow were causing great interference with their funnel smoke, and the enemy line was covered in cordite smoke from their guns firing. The smoke and flashes of the enemy salvos when coinciding with our fall of shot made spotting very difficult. The enemy were firing very rapidly. The Top reported that the funnel smoke of our battle cruisers ahead made their view very bad, so I did not shift my position to the top. I think that at this time all the battle cruisers except "P.R." had under-estimated the rate; we had.

3.52 the Germans were firing rapidly and getting our range; I saw splinters fly from our fo'csle past the gun control tower.

3.53 "Q" and "X" turrets did not come to the "ready." I had felt the concussion from hits on our armour, though I did not know for some minutes that both these turrets had been penetrated. "X" turret came



OFFICERS CONTROLLING THE FIRE ALOFT.

in again after missing two or three salvos, though with only one gun except at long intervals. Spotting was very difficult, but I increased the rate of fire as much as possible, firing double salvos. We received several more hits; but the transmitting station reported some good range-finder ranges received, so I came to range-finder range and fired as rapidly as possible using double salvos separated by small corrections. The enemy ceased to hit and her fire slackened. I do not think we were ever seriously hit by the enemy battle cruisers after 4.0 p.m.

4.5 *Indefatigable* blew up; I did not know it at the time. We continued rapid fire. About 4.10 I had the greatest difficulty in making sure of my target, as the enemy had a ship ahead of their line, probably a large light cruiser, which was sometimes there and sometimes not, and was making volumes of smoke. For some minutes about now, we counted her as a battle

cruiser, and so engaged No. 3 instead of No. 4 of the enemy line. I thought we were doing well. The enemy fire had slackened as far as we were concerned, but the smoke and gun-flashes of the enemy still made spotting difficult, and the decreased visibility had made the range-finder readings few and far between. I knew "Q" turret was badly hit and had flooded a magazine, but the enemy fire was not effective, and although conditions were difficult I thought we had got the better of the Germans.

At 4.24 I felt a concussion ahead, and looking forward saw an enormous sheet of flame and a cloud of black smoke—the *Queen Mary* had blown up. We steamed on into the cloud. It was pitch black, we could not fire, so I used the opportunity to "line up director."<sup>1</sup> Before this was finished we were clear of the smoke cloud, and I got the order to shift target to 3rd battle cruiser from the right, as we were now 3rd ship in the line. We fired a couple of salvos in gun-layer firing before getting back into director. The enemy fire was still feeble, and as the visibility had become good for a few minutes, we made real "battle practice" for some time. 200 yards' corrections were taking the salvos from short to over, and this was one of the few occasions when I was able to see the splashes of overs between the enemy funnels. One of the enemy battle cruisers lost her place in the line, and came dropping back. It was either the leading or second ship I thought, and when she became No. 3 we had a nice shoot at her, but the visibility was not keeping good.

4.25, enemy destroyers attacked and our 6-inch battery had five minutes at them, but at long range.

4.30, the enemy battle cruisers were out of sight in the mist or smoke-screen, and we checked fire, but about ten minutes later a squadron of enemy battleships came into view on our port bow, and just then *Lion* turned 16 points to starboard, and we followed her round. I think they hit us with a few 12-inch in the forecastle and funnels—we gauged the size from bits of shell afterwards. Then the 5th B.S., which came past us on our port side directly after we turned, engaged them, and we lost sight of them.

4.40, we were now going back on our tracks, and there was a lull with no enemy in sight. I got permission to go and see the condition of "Q" and "X" turrets and see if I could assist them. The following was their condition, although I did not find it all out until later:—

"X" Turret.—An 11-inch shell had hit the barbette, level with the upper deck. It had penetrated the 9-inch plate, killed the centre sight-setter, and was found intact, except for its nose and fuse, in the gun-house exactly in the geometrical centre of the turret, between the two guns and between the upper and lower floors of the gun-house. No other damage was done except the cutting of the main director firing circuits and the temporary

<sup>1</sup> Lining up the director is the method of checking that the electrical receivers of the director firing system, in each turret, are all in step with the master instrument aloft. All instruments, including the master instrument, are run down to zero (or to a special lining up mark). When all are together at this mark all will be in step with one another.





PIECE OF ARMOUR PLATE PUNCHED OUT BY SHELL  
HITTING "NEW ZEALAND."



ROOF OF "Q" TURRET, "TIGER."





4.50 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Gunnery Officer of H.M.S. "Tiger."

jamming of the gun-loading doors by fragments of shell and of armour, and the smashing of one firing dynamo.

"Q" Turret had been hit on the roof in the centre sighting hood, the shell appearing to have burst there, blowing a large hole in the roof plate. Two men in the gun-house were killed and several wounded, including the midshipman of the turret, who died of his wounds next day. All sights were destroyed, and the director firing circuits were cut. The right gun-loading cage was jammed, but luckily in the "down" position so that it did not interfere with the hand loading. The left gun-loading cage was temporarily jammed, the range-finder and lookout periscope smashed, but the officer of the turret was unhurt. He got up his spare crew from below, cleared away the dead and wounded, got his left gun into action with director training and laying, and fired with the sound of the other turrets' firing. Also, after a lapse of a few minutes, he got the right gun going with hand loading with his spare crew.

4.50 p.m., I had just got on to the roof of "X" turret and was talking to the officer of the turret, when the turret began to train and I saw the other turrets doing the same, and then an enemy salvo arrived near the ship. I did record time back to the gun control tower, and found my assistant had everything ready and guns trained on the enemy flashes, but there were no enemy visible. They appeared soon, and I was surprised and annoyed to see that they were apparently our old friends the battle cruisers, and that there were still five of them. I thought the one dropping astern had been done for. We opened on the third from the left, which I could distinguish as having a large red centre funnel. The enemy were in irregular order and soon turned away and were out of sight, but as by now I knew of the loss of the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary*, I realised that we had lost two ships and the enemy none, and although I felt that the enemy were badly knocked about—their fire was nothing compared to what it had been during the first ten minutes—this state of affairs made one very angry. I knew the 5th B.S. were engaging the enemy battle fleet astern of us, but I knew nothing of the position of our battle fleet except that it was out in the North Sea.

At 4.58 we sighted the enemy and re-engaged the same ship as before, the 3rd from the left, distinguished by a red centre funnel. The light was much better, and we had a good run at her, almost as good as our shoot just after the *Queen Mary* sank, and she appeared to drop out of line. As she dropped astern we engaged the new ship, which had now become No. 3 from the left.

At 5.10 we lost sight of the enemy in the mist. Our speed was now 24 knots. Checked the ammunition used, and found that "B" turret, which as far as I know never missed a salvo throughout the action, had fired five

or six common shells, as the shell-room parties had not been able to get the armour-piercing shell into the cages quickly enough. This accounted for the spread for direction which I had noticed earlier in the action, and for which I had lined up the director and found it correct. We lined up again; all correct. "A" turret reported right gun temporarily out of action with a fractured run-out valve box, to which a most skilful repair was made later on.

5.42, sighted the enemy battle cruisers again, and our ships opened fire. We again had a good light and a good run, but later on spotting became harder. The enemy reply was extremely feeble as far as we were concerned. There were very large splashes, presumably 15-inch salvoes from our 5th B.S., falling near the rear enemy battle cruisers.

At 6 o'clock the visibility became poor and the firing very intermittent.

At 6.5 we sighted the mass of our battle fleet on our port bow, and I was very glad to see them. . . . I then realised that our Admiral had led the enemy to our fleet; but I did not know that we were circling round the enemy and that we were getting between him and his ports.

At 6.7 a disabled German light cruiser appeared on our port bow, and one of our torpedo boat destroyers appeared to "loaf" up to her and torpedo her—our destroyer appeared to be half-disabled herself too (this was the *Onslow*). The light cruiser was down by the stern and burning. I did not think she was worth 13.5 ammunition, of which we had used a good deal, but we put the 6-inch guns on to her to prevent her firing torpedoes or guns at us as we passed, and they had a very nice run at her. From reports afterwards, I gathered she must have been the *Wiesbaden*, which later received fire from the battle fleet.

6.19, visibility was poor; and there was a lot of smoke about. We sighted a line of battleships, *Konigs*, I thought, and opened fire on the third from the left. In about four minutes we were having a good run at her.

6.29, enemy out of sight. Smoke and mist.

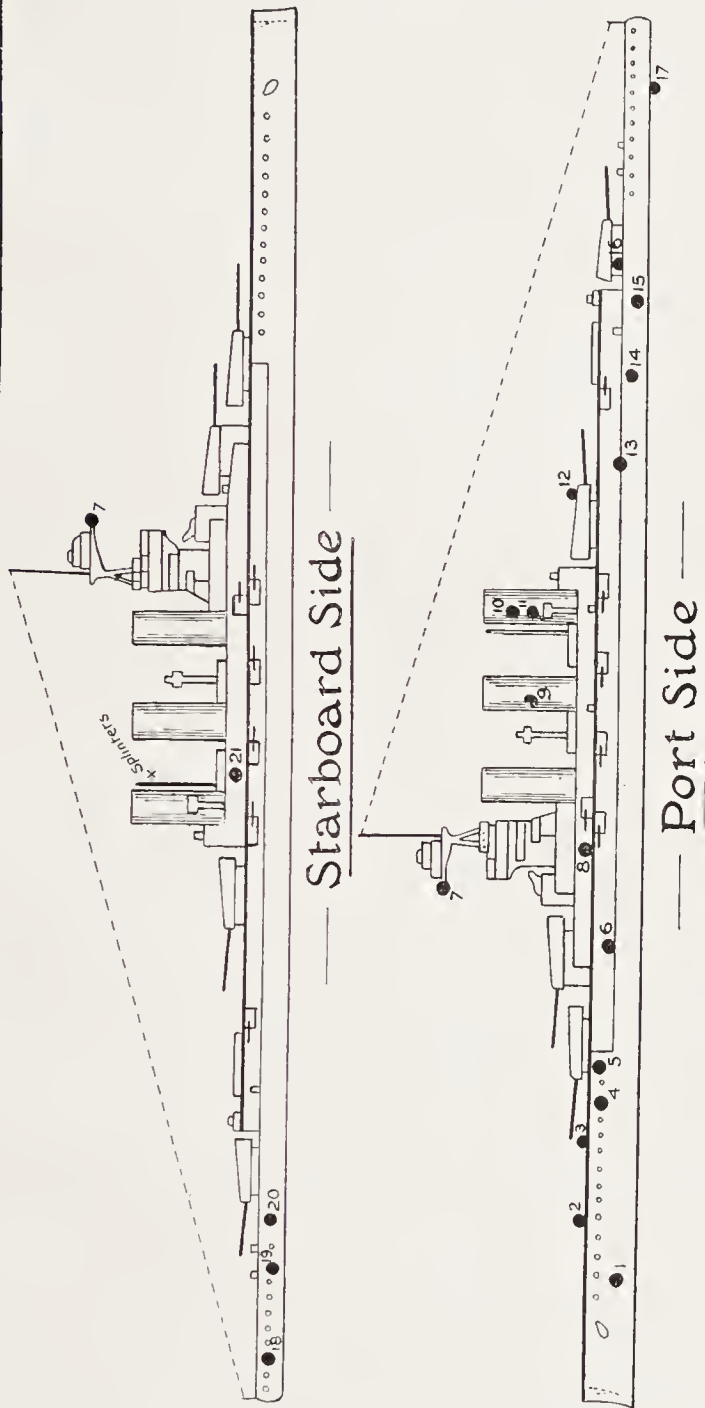
6.32, fired a couple of salvoes through a hole in the enemy smoke screen at an enemy stern on.

6.35, *Defence* class cruisers crossed our bows, steaming towards enemy and firing on both sides. The enemy battle cruisers were just visible on our starboard bow, and apparently not firing, but there was a squadron on our starboard beam, from which gun-flashes only were visible, concentrating a terrific fire on the advancing *Defence*, now on our starboard bow. The leading cruiser, the *Defence* herself, blew up with an explosion very similar to that of *Queen Mary*.

There was the sound of heavy fire astern, and I thought our battle fleet must be in action all along the line.

6.36, German torpedo boat destroyers emerged from the smoke on our starboard beam, presumably to attack ships astern of us, and we engaged them with our 6-inch guns, and appeared to sink at least one of the leading boats.





## — HITS SUSTAINED BY H.M.S. "TIGER" —

1	5·9"	9. 10. 11	11"
2	11" Pitched on forecastle - burst in cable locker flat	12	11" Burst on Q turret Blew in Centre sighting hood.
3	Two 11" projectiles burst in Sick Bay just before turn at 4.35 p.m.	13	11" Did more damage than any other projectile.
4	11"	14. 15	11" Did not penetrate belt.
5	Hit "A" barbette - 12"	16	11" Burst on "X" turret
6	Burst in flour store - 11"	17. 18. 19. 20	5·9"
7	Carried away steaming light - 11"	21	12" Broke back of Steam pinnace & No 4 Derrick. Blew away battery door and part of bulkhead.
8	11" bounced off without doing much damage.		



A sudden alteration of course to avoid a torpedo, which I did not see, was made at 6.39. The 13.5's reported the amount of ammunition expended, totalling about 250 rounds.

7.17, enemy squadron of four ships re-appeared—our old friends the battle cruisers, I thought, but their fire now was feeble or non-existent. We opened fire on 3rd ship. Their line was confused, and one ship was lagging astern.

7.20, enemy made dense smoke screen from destroyers and turned away. We checked fire, and I could hear no firing astern.

7.53, tested director on one of our light cruisers on port bow. All correct. Checked ammunition expended.

8.20, sighted a group of ships on starboard bow and opened fire on 3rd from left, a three funnelled battleship of *Heligoland* class. Conditions for control easy, except for deflection which was upset by the enemy apparently slowing down, and we appeared to be doing well. The enemy scarcely replied, and was burning fiercely, which we could see plainly in the gathering dusk.

8.40, lost sight of enemy in smoke and dusk. I was surprised to see it getting dark and asked the time, thinking it about 5.30 p.m., and was amazed to hear that it was nearly nine o'clock.

8.45, I felt a heavy shock, and thought we had been torpedoed, but nothing happened.

. . . . .

Night.—We had eased speed, and, as it became dark, prepared for the night and the chance of meeting the enemy. We served out food for the men, and I sent my messenger to bag the remains of the ward-room tea from the ward-room, on which we feasted in the gun control tower. I dared not leave the control to see the damage, and anyhow I knew the turret officers, armourers, hydraulic E.R.A.'s, and electricians would do everything that could be done, and so well did they do it that by daylight every gun in the ship was in full working order except the right gun and the sights of "Q" turret. These two jobs were dockyard work, and we could do nothing at sea.

As a matter of fact nothing happened to us during the night, and I had great difficulty in keeping awake.

Morning.—When daylight came the visibility was low—a thick mist on the sea. Our squadron altered course 16 points, and I felt a feeling of mean pride in that—apparently—the *Tiger* was the only one of the 1st or 2nd B.C.S. whose turrets were all training. A Zeppelin appeared, and some ships—wisely—unloaded their guns at her. After that I had little hope of seeing any more enemy. Not that I felt at all keen to meet fresh enemy battleships—if there were such things—I knew now the extent of the damage to our ship and our squadron, but I was sure that the enemy battle cruisers were badly hammered, and we should



have liked a full revenge for *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable*. I was not yet sure of the loss of *Invincible*, though I could see she was not with the 3rd B.C.S., which had joined us. As a matter of fact, when we had passed her wreck the previous evening, I had thought she was a German, and had passed word below that we were passing a sunken German ship.

Now came the time of clearing up and repairs. As it was still thick I could not leave the control position, and I did not see the worst of this, but I attended the burial service on the upper deck in the drizzle and spray. The wind had got up a little by the afternoon. It was most impressive. At this time, I had no idea that the fleet had engaged in one of the great actions of the war. I thought that it had been just a cruiser action like the Dogger Bank. Gradually reports came in from the battle fleet, and we were elated by news of German losses. We were surprised on arrival in harbour to find that the public were prepared for news of a defeat, and asked our people why we had not sunk the Germans at last. But we were well received by the local inhabitants.

**Arrival in Harbour.**—When we got into harbour we tackled the repairs again, and were ready for sea very soon. But a worse job was the writing of the reports. Evidence was hopelessly conflicting as regards the enemy, and the fire control table records were the only really reliable data. But reports had to be made, and in a hurry, as well as the repairs executed, and I fear that the reports were far from complete. It was very hard to know which officers and men in the gunnery department to recommend for special recognition when all had done so well. I have said little about the personnel in this narrative, for in my duty I saw little of them during the action, except just my gun control tower crew. They were perfect. But from the way orders were carried out I knew it must be same throughout the ship. The reports from the officers of turrets, transmitting station, the 6-inch control and 6-inch guns confirmed this. No praise can be too high for the officers and men.

**Control Notes.**—Most of my experiences I have described in these notes, but there are a few other non-technical points which may be of interest. The enemy shorts frequently wetted the top control position: I commenced by using 12 power glasses, but soon changed to 6: I did not experience any eye strain.

Blast from our own guns was not as severe as I had expected; blast from enemy shell was non-existent in the G.C.T., and for all I could tell the enemy might have been using practice projectiles. The enemy shell could clearly be seen after they ricocheted short, but I saw none before they ricocheted. Until dusk, I could not see our 13·5-inch shells burst—we were using armour-piercing shell—but I did see the 6-inch high explosive bursting. Few of our overs could be seen. It was very hard to judge the inclination of the enemy, except of the leader of the enemy line, who was generally far clearer of smoke than any of the others. The total



ARMOUR PLATE PIERCED BY  
SHELL THAT ENTERED  
"TIGER'S" ENGINE-ROOM.



"Q" TURRET,  
"LION."

THICK FRONT  
ARMOUR PLATE  
PIERCED AT  
JUNCTION WITH  
ROOF PLATE.

Photo taken after  
Plate had been  
removed and placed  
on Deck.



*To face page 56.]*





number of rounds we fired was:—13·5-inch, 304; and 6-inch, 140. We were hit 21 times—viz., 2, 12-inch; 11, 11-inch; and 5, 5·9-inch hits. At the time I knew nothing about the hits which were not on armour, except for seeing some splinters fly from the forecastle, but the hits on the armour jolted the whole ship.

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## Narrative of an Officer in the Engine-Room of H.M.S. "Tiger."

I think the outstanding impression that remains regarding the Jutland Battle is the suddenness and unexpectedness of the whole incident. After one and a half years' service with the First Battle Cruiser Squadron, with almost weekly "sweeps" into German waters, the experience had become almost monotonous, as these cruises, except for the Dogger Bank brush and a sight of an occasional Zeppelin, were almost without incident.

On 31st May, 1916, one of these cruises was in progress, and although high authorities may have known that something more than usual was on the tapis, the generality of officers and men were certainly unaware that anything was likely to happen. They were disillusioned with dramatic suddenness. About 3.45 p.m. (summer time) word was passed that enemy cruisers were in sight, and it was generally believed at first that a portion of the enemy light forces had been caught napping whilst out on a raiding expedition. Action stations were sounded, and hardly had everyone settled at their post—my particular station was the port turbine-room—when word was passed that enemy battle cruisers were in sight, and that "Der Tag" was imminent. The accuracy of the prophecy was promptly confirmed by the firing of our big guns, and by the thuds and crashes of heavy projectiles, which told us that we were under fire of guns of considerable calibre. Previous experience enabled even those cooped up between decks to judge fairly accurately, not only which of our own guns were firing, but also the general location of the enemy hits on us.

Very early in the action an incident occurred which came very near terminating the career of the *Tiger*. A heavy thud, followed by a deafening report immediately overhead, intimated that a heavy shell had penetrated the side armour and had burst inboard. The base of the shell, forced out intact by the explosion, penetrated the upper deck and the armoured deck, and punched a neat hole in the steel bracket supporting the main steam pipe on the forward bulkhead of the port engine-room, and remained balanced overhead. Had the base of the projectile struck the pipe instead of the bracket, the whole engine-room staff would have been wiped out, and the ship completely disabled until the steam to the damaged piping was shut off, an operation which would probably have involved the vessel being destroyed by concentrated enemy fire as she drifted helpless out of the line.

The immediate consequences, however, were quite serious enough. The shell bursting in the ammunition passage killed a dozen men, set fire to the ready-use cordite in the passage, rendering it necessary to flood the midships 6-inch magazine, cut through the fresh and salt water mains, and finally the base of the shell, in penetrating to the engine-room, severed the H.P. air pressure ring main, giving the impression by the hiss of escaping air that the steam pipe itself was damaged. No examination could be made to locate the trouble, as through the hole in the deck were pouring the fumes from the burning cordite, and the engine-room was immediately filled with dense smoke, which rendered it impossible to see. Gauges, telegraphs, etc., could only be examined by the aid of flash lights and electric torches at intervals.

To add to the difficulties, water from the severed mains poured through the damaged deck overhead, over the separators, and over the main steam pipes on to the platform, so that the men stationed there were subjected as the ship rolled, to alternate cascades of cold and semi-boiling water. Attempts were made to proceed to the scene of the explosions from the forward end of the engine-room, but it was found that the forward escape was blocked by wreckage. Access was finally obtained through the escape at the after end of the engine-room, and the depleted repair party, many of whom had been killed or put out of action by the explosion and fumes, set to work to plug the damaged piping in the passages.

In the engine-rooms matters gradually improved. As the cordite burnt out the smoke clouds became less dense, and matters assumed a more normal aspect. The roar of the heavy guns continued steadily the while, informing all that, whatever the general state of affairs were in the fleet, the *Tiger* was keeping her end up, while frequent bursts of firing from our 6-inch secondary armament indicated the approach of enemy destroyers or light craft. From time to time messages of varying import reached us from the upper deck. The loss of the *Queen Mary* was marked by the filling of engine-rooms with dense clouds of smoke, as the *Tiger* steamed through the area where she had been, and occasional lulls enabled hurried expeditions to be made to the scene of serious damages for essential repairs to be organised and arranged for. Men in isolated posts were visited and occasional exchanges of posts arranged.

Eventually the firing gradually died away, and towards 11 p.m. word was passed that the immediate action was ended, but that action stations would be resumed at dawn, or earlier. The interval was spent in frenzied work on repairs, and some of the scenes between decks in the vicinity of shell bursts beggar description. But the most marked feature of the action that came under my personal observation was the coolness and discipline of the engine-room and artisan staff generally, under the most trying conditions, and their initiative and readiness of resource in effecting apparently impossible repairs in emergencies.

## Chapter V.



### THE 5th BATTLE SQUADRON.



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## CHAPTER V.

### The 5th Battle Squadron.

*The 5th Battle Squadron consisted of the four battleships, "Barham," "Valiant," "Malaya," and "Warspite," under the command of Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas. The four ships were super-dreadnoughts of the "Queen Elizabeth" class, carrying each a broadside of eight 15-inch guns, and as they were designed for a speed of 25 knots and had adequate armour protection, they were the most powerful ships afloat at Jutland.*

*It so happened that on the 30th May this squadron was detached from the main battle fleet up at Scapa Flow, and was lying at Rosyth as a reinforcement to Sir David Beatty's battle cruisers, for the latter had been depleted by three "Invincible" class battle cruisers which were doing exercises up North.*

*When the enemy were first sighted in the early afternoon of May 31st, the 5th Battle Squadron were steaming roughly 10 miles to the northward of the "Lion" and other battle cruisers (vide Plans pp. 6 and 36). They were, therefore, during the early stages of the action when the course was southerly, some 5 to 10 miles astern of the battle-cruiser action, and were able to engage only the tail of the German battle cruiser line at extreme range.*

*At 4.46, however, when the German High Seas Fleet was sighted, the course of the action, as we have read, was suddenly reversed to north, and immediately the 5th Battle Squadron closed rapidly on to the battle cruisers.*

*Rear-Admiral Evan Thomas, his flag flying in H.M.S. "Barham," was leading the 5th Battle Squadron, and confident in the fighting strength of his "magnificent squadron," he held on past the "Lion," "Princess Royal," "Tiger," and "New Zealand," until, when well between our battle cruisers and the chasing German battle fleet, he at last swung round to starboard on to a northerly course, and was followed by "Valiant," "Warspite," and "Malaya." At almost exactly 5.0 p.m. the 5th Battle Squadron was in rear of our battle cruisers on the same northerly course as them, but now taking the brunt of the enemy's fire off them and engaging steadily the leading German battle squadron.*

*"4.55. Our battle cruisers passed between us and the enemy. . . .  
"I counted four, there had been six. . . . As we were on opposite courses,  
"the battle cruisers passed us very rapidly, and we did not get much chance  
"to see how matters were going with them. . . . We continued on our course  
"towards the enemy battle fleet for what seemed an eternity, but which in  
"reality was only about 5 minutes. Then we turned 16 points to starboard  
"in succession (4.59). When it was time for the 'Malaya' to turn, the  
"turning point was a very 'hot corner.' The shells were pouring in very*

## Narrative of a Midshipman in H.M.S. "Malaya."

"fast, and it is doubtful if we, the last ship of the line, could have got through without a severe hammering if the Captain had not used his initiative and turned the ship early.

"When we had turned . . . I saw that our battle cruisers, proceeding northerly at full speed in close action with the German battle cruisers, were already quite 7,000 or 8,000 yards ahead of us. I then realised that just the four of us of the 5th Battle Squadron alone would have to entertain the High Seas Fleet—four against perhaps twenty. . . . At about 5.15 their salvoes began to arrive thick and fast round us at the rate of 6, 8, or 9 a minute. From my position in the turret I could see them falling just short, could hear them going just over, and saw several times a great column of black water fall on top of the turret."

(Narrative of a Turret Officer of H.M.S. "Malaya.")

This was the beginning of an hour of very intensive heavy fighting between the four ships of the 5th Battle Squadron and the 8 or 9 leading Dreadnoughts of the German battle fleet, which had sufficient speed to keep and even to close the range on our ships, although the speed ordered from 5.10 onwards was 25 knots.

How severe was the fighting experienced the following narratives from "Malaya" and "Warspite" will show. The period which is described is principally the "Run to the North" from 5.0 to 6.0 p.m., but the narratives also continue on to describe a fresh phase of the action, the main battle fleet period which commenced at about 6.15 p.m., when the Rosyth Force made contact with Sir John Jellicoe's main squadrons from Scapa, and the Grand Fleet battle squadrons at last came into touch with the High Seas Fleet.

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## Narrative of a Midshipman in H.M.S. "Malaya."

(Rear Ship of the 5th B.S.)

On May 31st, 1916, I was a very Junior Midshipman of the tender age of sixteen and a quarter years, having been at sea four months. But, in spite of this short experience, we had already got more or less used to the idea of suddenly raising steam and going to sea, and on the occasion of leaving Rosyth the day before Jutland, even the "war worn" senior midshipmen of two years' service were incapable of mustering one "buzz" between them, and we were all bored stiff at the prospect of another uneventful sweep.

I was Midshipman of the afternoon watch on May 31st, when a signal was received which seemed to excite the small crowd on Monkeys' Island,<sup>1</sup> and being, like all snotties, very curious, I eventually mustered up enough courage to ask the Officer of the Watch what it was about, only to be

<sup>1</sup> The usual name for the Upper Bridge, from where the Captain, or the Officer of the Watch, control the ship.



snubbed for my pains. A few minutes later, however, the Captain sent me down to the Engineer Commander with a copy of a signal (which naturally I suppose, I read). It was from the *Galatea*, reporting two enemy ships in sight. I duly returned to the bridge, after telling the Engineer Commander that the Captain wanted steam for full speed as soon as possible.

By this time I was beginning to feel slightly excited, but still did not realise what it all meant. A few minutes later the hands were piped to tea, and my excitement cooled; only, however, nearly to consume me again when, on receipt of another signal, I was told to call all officers in their cabins, and to order the bugler to sound off "Action." This I did, giving the officers the news that there was something exciting in the wind for a change. After this I'm afraid my extreme youth so worked me up that events followed one another in such confusion that I do not remember very clearly what happened. I remember being chased off the bridge by the Captain and proceeding to my action station in the torpedo control tower, and on getting there discovering that some of the control instruments were in the Torpedo Control Officer's cabin, so I was sent down to get them. All doors and hatches had been shut when action was sounded off, so I had to open a door to get into the cabin flat. The Chief Carpenter was the officer responsible for seeing these doors were shut, and unfortunately I met him on the way back, and in spite of all my pleadings had to leave him still convinced that it was his bounden duty to report me to the Commander for the grave offence of opening a water-tight door without permission. I spent the rest of the time until we opened fire wondering how much the punishment would be, and what was the best way of minimising the pain thereof.

. . . . .

I think we only realised that we were at last in for a proper action when we heard the battle cruisers firing ahead. We then began to get quite jubilant; so much so, that when a German shell landed abreast us on the port side about 500 yards short there was a positive cheer from the *Malaya*. Then we heard the other ships of our own squadron open fire, one after the other ahead of us, each salvo helped on its way by a cheer. In our torpedo control tower we were so interested in what was going on, that when *Malaya* herself opened fire the blast from "X" turret's guns, which were only a few feet away from us, sat us down with a "whump," and the range-taker came down from his seat with a crash.

From this time onwards my thoughts were really more like a nightmare than thoughts of a wide-awake human being. I don't think I felt fright, simply because what was going on around me was so unfamiliar that my brain was incapable of grasping it. Even now I can only think of the beginning of the action as through a dim haze. I remember seeing the enemy line on the horizon with red specks coming out of them, which I tried to realise were the cause of projectiles landing around us, continually covering us with spray, but the fact refused to sink into my brain. We



were all the time rather excited, and our enthusiasm knew no bounds when we passed a sunken ship with survivors swimming around her. We never dreamt that it was one of our own battle cruisers ; but it was the *Indefatigable*, and over a thousand dead men lay in her wreck. The same thing occurred when we passed the wreckage and survivors of the *Queen Mary*. Even when a man on some wreckage waved to us, we thought it must be a German wanting to be picked up. It is rather dreadful to think of now, especially as some men were not too keen on rescuing Germans after the *Lusitania* and similar atrocities, but I have often thought since how well it showed the confidence that we had in our own fleet that no one for a moment imagined that one of our own ships would be sunk so soon.

Before we turned to the North (at about 5 p.m.), we could see some of the German ships on fire, which cheered us very much. By this time we were under a very hot fire, and were zigzagging slightly to avoid it. I was very impressed by the absolute cloud of shells which landed under the next-ahead's stern as she turned 16 points, and I remember thinking what a mess her quarter deck would have been in if she had been going a few knots slower.

After the turn I had no time for anything except to plot the enemy's deflection, as we were about to fire a torpedo. The foremost tube, however, jammed, and nothing could move the bar.<sup>1</sup> The crew of the forward torpedo flat used some really artistic language when telling us that the starboard bar would not go out, either by power or by hand. We eventually fired from our starboard after tube.

All this time I was gradually getting my thoughts out of their "dreamy" state, and was slowly beginning to realise that all these projectiles falling a few yards short and over were big ones, and that they were meant for us ; and my thoughts, following their natural course, led me on to think of my life-saving waistcoat, which, like a fool, I had left in my sea-chest down below. There was no chance of getting it now.

All this time we were being thrown about by the blast of "X" turret, and we spent quite a portion of our time in ungraceful and rather painful positions on the deck, bumping against the range-finder, plotter, and other things with sharp corners.

The next thing of much interest that I remember was a very loud crash, followed by a sound like hail. After a short space of silent thought we disentangled ourselves, and I, being inexperienced, looked through the starboard sighting hole at "X" turret, the roof of which had become rather like a badly-made saucer, see-sawing on top of the turret. I caught a vision of the crew inside still going strong, but my interesting report of this was cut short by a salvo from that turret, which precipitated me backwards into the arms of an able seaman, and incidentally reduced me to a state of wandering wonder for several minutes. "X" turret had been hit by a shell on the roof, but was still in action.

<sup>1</sup> A part of the mechanism of a submerged torpedo tube.

Recovering from the shock of this, I was even nearer realising what was happening around us—yet was still unaware of any desire to be elsewhere—when there came a sudden shudder and lurch through the ship, a frightful din of escaping steam, and the ship took an uncomfortable list to starboard. There followed tender enquiries from the torpedo flats, switch-board, and other stations below decks as to our welfare, whether we were still alive, and also whether there were still any Huns left. To both questions we replied in the affirmative.

At this period the battle cruisers were well ahead, and the four ships of our squadron were getting the full hate of the German fleet, which was far from pleasant. About 6.15 p.m. the *Defence* appeared between us and the enemy, on our starboard quarter, and after firing several rounds was suddenly enveloped in smoke and flames, and when these lifted, there was only a small space of smooth water where two minutes before had been a ship and her crew of 900 men. Just before this I had been thinking of the four midshipmen of my term who were in her, so it is hardly surprising that the sight of her blowing up brought home to me just what we were taking part in; what is more, it came with a distinct shock, and I had a fleeting glance of other ships having the same sudden end. I think I can truthfully say that it was at this stage of the action that I realised that the Germans were rather good shots, and also that there weren't many of us, but a deuce of a lot of them. In fact, to use another slang term, just about now I had "wind-up"; but it was a comic feeling of being well scared and yet at the same time liking it, a feeling that I cannot quite describe in mere words. One thing I can express is the pleasure it was to see the *Agincourt* suddenly appear in sight ahead, looking more like a Brock's Benefit than a battleship, as she poured out salvos from her broadside of fourteen 12-inch guns. After this we saw very little of the enemy, as it was very thick, and we were now the last ship in the battle line.

. . . . .

Shortly after 7.30 p.m. we lost touch altogether with the enemy, and a lull in the action occurred. After having a look at the damage done to "X" turret, I went forward, and was surprised to see a large shell hole in the upper deck near No. 3 6-inch gun starboard. The lower boom stanchion was buckled out of all recognition, and the bread store was a twisted heap of wreckage. I went down to the battery, where everything was dark chaos. Most of the wounded had been taken away, but several of the killed were still there. The most ghastly part of the whole affair was the smell of burnt human flesh, which remained in the ship for weeks, making everybody have a sickly nauseous feeling the whole time. When the battery was finally lighted by an emergency circuit, it was a scene which cannot easily be forgotten,—everything burnt black and bare from the fire; the galley, canteen and drying-room bulkheads blown and twisted into the most grotesque shapes, and the whole deck covered by about





*From a Painting.]*

FIFTH BATTLE SQUADRON IN ACTION.

*[To face page 64.]*





6 inches of water and dreadful débris ; and permeating everywhere the awful stench of cordite fumes and of war. It is hardly surprising that the nerves of many of us were shaken, especially as the men below decks and in other stations away from the actual damage had never dreamt that we had suffered such damage or casualties.

. . . . .

By the time it was dark we were all at our stations again. Some of the torpedo control tower's crew were lying on the deck, whilst the remainder kept a look out.

It was extraordinary how tired we all felt—too tired even to think, or even to dream about what we had gone through and seen. Men must be dead beat to sleep solidly on a hard, cold deck with the sharp corners of instruments sticking into them. Even the din of the commencement of the night attack failed to wake two of us, and we would probably have gone on sleeping till morning if someone had not trodden on our faces. At first we were really too tired to have anything but a detached interest in what was going on. It was the same "nightmare" state as we had experienced in the early part of the day action, except perhaps there was now added a subconscious wish that it was all over, and that we could be allowed to sleep undisturbed. This feeling was stopped by a sharp action which was taking place some distance on our starboard quarter, which we could only follow by the light of occasional searchlights, gun-flashes, or the larger flashes of destroyers on fire or blowing up. We saw one large ship lighted up some distance away on our starboard quarter, probably a German cruiser, but we could not tell at the time. My memory represents the night action as a foggy haze, with occasional visions of flashes from guns, dim glimpses of destroyers, and a general medley of noises. The whole thing was a confused blur to me at the time ; my mind was incapable of grasping it.

I remember we had the cheeriest breakfast party I've ever taken part in the next morning. It consisted of two officers and three men with a tin of "bully beef," cocoa in large quantities, and a colossal loaf of bread. But after we had finished we all became depressed again. In the gun-room it was the same, partly because all the wounded were outside.

That evening (June 1st) we buried some of the dead. There was not a soul without a lump in his throat, and quite a lot of the officers and men standing on the upper deck were very near to tears. I noticed the same thing when the dockyard matics working on board H.M.S. *Erin* cheered us on entering Invergordon.

One extraordinary effect on our nerves was that, although we were so tired, we were absolutely incapable of sleeping except for short periods with long stretches of wakefulness in between. But the most extraordinary sensation of all was that, although most of us were in a way scared, we would all have given our souls rather than have missed being in the action.

## Experiences in H.M.S. "Warspite."

Extracts from the Diary of her Executive Officer, who was stationed between decks in general charge of all Fire and Repair Parties.

Wednesday, May 31st, 1916.

At sea and steaming to the eastward about 20 knots in single line ahead. Battle cruisers about 10 miles ahead. Usual 6-inch gun sections on watch and two turrets closed up.

2.40 p.m. Message from the Captain by his messenger "to get the hands up at once." At same time signal was brought to me, "Cruiser in sight bearing north-east, probably hostile." I at once sounded off "action" . . . and passed the word round to everybody that we were in for the real thing. Went all round mess decks; wetted decks, put all tables and stools on the deck, and lit all "Action Candles," etc. Saw all doors and everything closed, and went up on deck. There was nothing in sight except our own ships, but we were steaming hard. Hoisted Battle Ensigns and Union Jack at after struts and masthead.

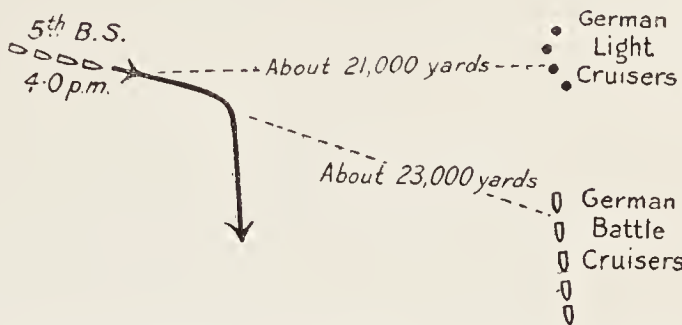
Went to my action station, "B" turret; found everything all right, and Officer of Turret reported all correct. It was now about 4 o'clock. Got orders to "load and train Red 20." Could not see anything at all, hazy and a lot of smoke about. We were steaming very hard. Wondered if our steering jackstaff would be shot away, as we had just fitted a new one. Everybody in the turret in very good spirits, and I asked G. if he had any cotton wool. He said he hadn't, and passed me a lump of cotton waste large enough to stop the ears of a donkey, which I chucked back at him; and almost at once we got the order to "stand by."

I made out five columns of smoke in the mist, and that was all I could see, no masts or anything else. Opened fire on light cruisers, range about 21,000 yards. Could see the fall of shot well, but could not see at all what we were firing at. Fired a few rounds by director, and saw *Barham* and *Valiant* were firing too; light cruisers were getting clearer now. Suddenly saw No. 2 column of smoke break out into a bright flame; this dropped astern, and at first I thought she was hit, but later I thought it was only a smoke box as it looked like an enormous calcium life buoy, bright flame and huge white smoke clouds drifting astern.

Found we were turning fast to starboard, and as we came round about 8 points I saw five enemy battle cruisers on port bow, about Red 40. They were steaming the same way as we were and going very hard. A mass of black smoke and I could only see their masts and the tops of their funnels above the horizon, and stern waves showing up white and very high. Opened fire on No. 5. I could not have laid on them myself; spotting frightfully hard, and we were all short; the range of the first few



salvoes was, I think, 23,000 yards. Blast from "A" turret was awfully bad, and blew salt water and dust into my eyes, which watered like blazes. I saw several of their salvoes splash short of us ; they fell into an extraordinary small spread, and made the dickens of a noise. I remember thinking how high the ricos. must be going over us. Caught sight of *Valiant* and *Barham* through the corner of my eye, and saw *Barham* straddled once or twice. I realised we were steering south, and it crossed my mind whether we should meet the High Seas Fleet. They straddled us once or twice, but we had not been hit at all so far. I think they were zigzagging very much, as their deflection was very hard to pick up.



About 5.0 p.m.<sup>1</sup>

I suddenly saw our battle cruisers coming close by about half a mile off in the opposite direction, and I realised they had turned back. I noticed that *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable* were adrift, but never for a moment realised they had sunk. Before this we had passed through a mass of black water with a destroyer picking up people. I heard afterwards this was *Queen Mary*. "X" turret of *Lion* was trained towards us with guns at full elevation, several hits showing on her port side, great black splashes.

One salvo came very close, just short, smothering us with spray, and I am afraid I "ducked" and talked to G. for a minute. We then turned 16 points in succession and trained the turret round full speed to the other beam.

Very soon after the turn I suddenly saw on the starboard quarter the whole of the High Seas Fleet ; at least I saw masts, funnels, and an endless ripple of orange flashes all down the line, how many I didn't try to count, as we were getting well strafed at this time, but I remember counting up to eight. The noise of their shells over and short was deafening, like doing "counting ship" at battle practice, that frightful crack, crack, crack, going on the whole time. Felt one or two very heavy shakes, but didn't think very much of it at the time, and it never occurred to me that we were being hit.

We were firing pretty fast on bearing about Green 120. I distinctly saw two of our salvoes hit the leading German battleship. Sheets of yellow flame went right over her mastheads, and she looked red fore and aft like a

<sup>1</sup> This and subsequent times which are given in the margin, are estimated only. During the action the author lost all count of time, and he did not include any times in his original account. They are introduced here for the convenience of the reader.—Ed.

burning haystack. I know we hit her hard. Told everybody in the turret that we were doing all right and to keep her going; machinery working like a clockwork mouse, and no hang-up of any sort whatever.

. . . . .

Received message from Captain to go aft and see what was the matter as we had been badly hit. Asked for message to be repeated, and got same through again. I thought for a few seconds "Should I go over, or down through shell-room?" but realised I ought to get there quickly, and decided to go over the top of the turret. I didn't waste much time on the roof, as the noise was awful, and they were coming over pretty thick. As I got down the starboard ladder of "B," both "A" and "B" turrets fired, and made me skip a bit quicker. Ran down port superstructure ladder and tried to get into port superstructure. All clips were on the door, so I climbed up over second cutter. Just as I got up one came through the after funnel with an awful screech and spattered about everywhere. I put up my coat collar and ran like a stag, feeling in the deuce of a funk.

Went right down to mess deck and all along port side. All was quiet, and could see nothing wrong at all. Went right aft and down starboard bathroom lobby, up to Captain's lobby and aft to Admiral's lobby. Saw No. 6 fire brigade were all right, and came back along lobby to mess deck again. Sent telephone message to Captain to say nothing was wrong aft as far as I could tell. As a matter of fact, we had been hit under water-line abreast capstan engine flat, but this I did not know.

I crossed the cooks' lobby and told ammunition supply parties that things were going on all right. Went through to foc'sle mess deck, and was just going forward when 12-inch shell came through side armour on boys' mess deck. Terrific sheet of golden flame, stink, impenetrable dust, and everything seemed to fall everywhere with an appalling noise. Called for No. 2 fire brigade, and they ran up from the flat below, and we got hose on, and put out a lot of burning refuse. Directly water went on to the "glow" it vanished, and I can't say what was burning; personally, I think it was water-gas or something like it.

Several of the fire brigade were ill due to the sweet, sickly stench, but there was no signs of poison gas. The shell hole was clean, about a foot in diameter; big flakes of armour had been flung right across the mess deck, wrecking everything. Many armour bolts came away. Magazine flooding cabinet was completely wrecked, and all voice pipes and electric leads overhead were cut to pieces. Smoke was pouring up through holes in the deck, and it occurred to me that the high-angle gun magazine was very close. Told P. to stand by to flood it from middle-deck position. Water from cut fire mains was pouring below, and smoke soon stopped. Everybody busy souvenir hunting, and had to put the hose over them to make them take cover below again.

. . . . .





"WARSPITE"—ARMOUR PLATE PIERCED BY SHELL THAT EXPLODED  
IN BOYS' MESS DECK.



"WARSPITE"—SIDE BLOWN OUT BY SHELL EXPLODING IN CAPTAIN'S LOBBY.





About 5.30 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Experiences in H.M.S. "Warspite."

*About 5.30 p.m.*

Went right aft port side, and aft to Captain's lobby. Found water pouring in through Admiral's scuttles, and deck aft all gone. There was about a foot of water in after cabin; billiard table untouched. Got carpenters and everybody out of it, as nothing could be done; it was obvious the side was blown in below Admiral's cabin. Stern was very deep, due to hard steaming, and water was pumping up as ship pitched.

After submerged torpedo flat reported that water was coming in to after flat; talked to them down escape hatch, and realised it was not anything really; subsequently found it was due to submerged flat hatch "giving" a bit when burst occurred above, but no more water came down afterwards.

Captain's lobby was at this time untouched. Was just going up hatch to casemate lobby when I was called back and told a shell had just burst in Captain's lobby. Went aft again and found my cabin had been completely removed overboard. Lobby in an awful state, and hole about 12 feet diameter in the centre of the deck. Lot of burning débris in my cabin, which we put out; in the middle of this heap was my wife's miniature, without its case, but otherwise perfect. Sleeping cabin was not so bad, and only spattered with splinters. There were about four bursts in lobby. Trunk to steering department was wrecked, stanchions cut through, Captain's pantry in heaps, and everything in a filthy state of indescribable wreckage. Realised things were pretty warm aft and nothing could be done, so went forward again before any more arrived; holes in quarter deck and my cabin let in daylight.

Went along by No. 5 fire brigade and saw we had been heavily hit port side. Helped with fire brigade in port casemate lobby plugging cut fire mains and trying to stop water getting down ventilating trunks. Columns of water pouring through hole in deck overhead, must have been from enemy shorts. Centre line armoured door was blown off its hinges, and whole of after flat in an awful state, everything blown to pieces and spattered by splinters. The resin out of corticine makes everything in a horrid state of black, sticky, glue-like stuff when hit by shell fire.

A shell had come in further forward and hit "X" turret barquette armour, killing several of No. 5 fire brigade and wounding a lot more. Water was pouring through hole in side into sergeants' mess, flooding main deck and going down shell hole to centre engine-room supply trunk. I realised we could not effectively stop hole in the side, and decided we must at all costs prevent water getting to engine-room. We plugged the supply trunk by big sheets of rubber shored down with deal flats. This, of course, stopped ventilation to engine-rooms, and they got pretty hot down below. Left marines plugging hole in ship's side with hammocks, but a lot of water was coming in and washing away all attempts at plugging.

Blast of shell momentarily put out lights, but candles were instantly re-lit, and did well. Oil lamps, as was expected, went out, and were not

re-lit. Electric light bulbs broke in vicinity of shell bursts. Lot of broken glass about the deck made it awkward to get about; also sharp, jagged plates were regular death-traps. Everyone must wear leather sea boots—these are now supplied. All fire brigade and repair parties must have thick leather hedger's gloves, as it was very bad to try and handle the jagged plates.

The body of this 12-inch shell was found above the engineers' workshop, unexploded. The filling was sticking out like a chock of wood, and a couple of stokers were trying to chip the fuse out. I luckily stopped this little effort. It is extraordinary the amount of damage this one unexploded shell did; I can't help thinking that there were two shells.

Went forward along port side of mess deck and sent W. to telephone to the Captain saying things were all right. Had a cigarette the port side of cook's lobby, or rather started one to steady my feelings. Had a yarn here with the Pay., who was wandering about in a "Kapok" waistcoat using appalling language as to when the Grand Fleet were going to turn up. Had a laugh together anyway.

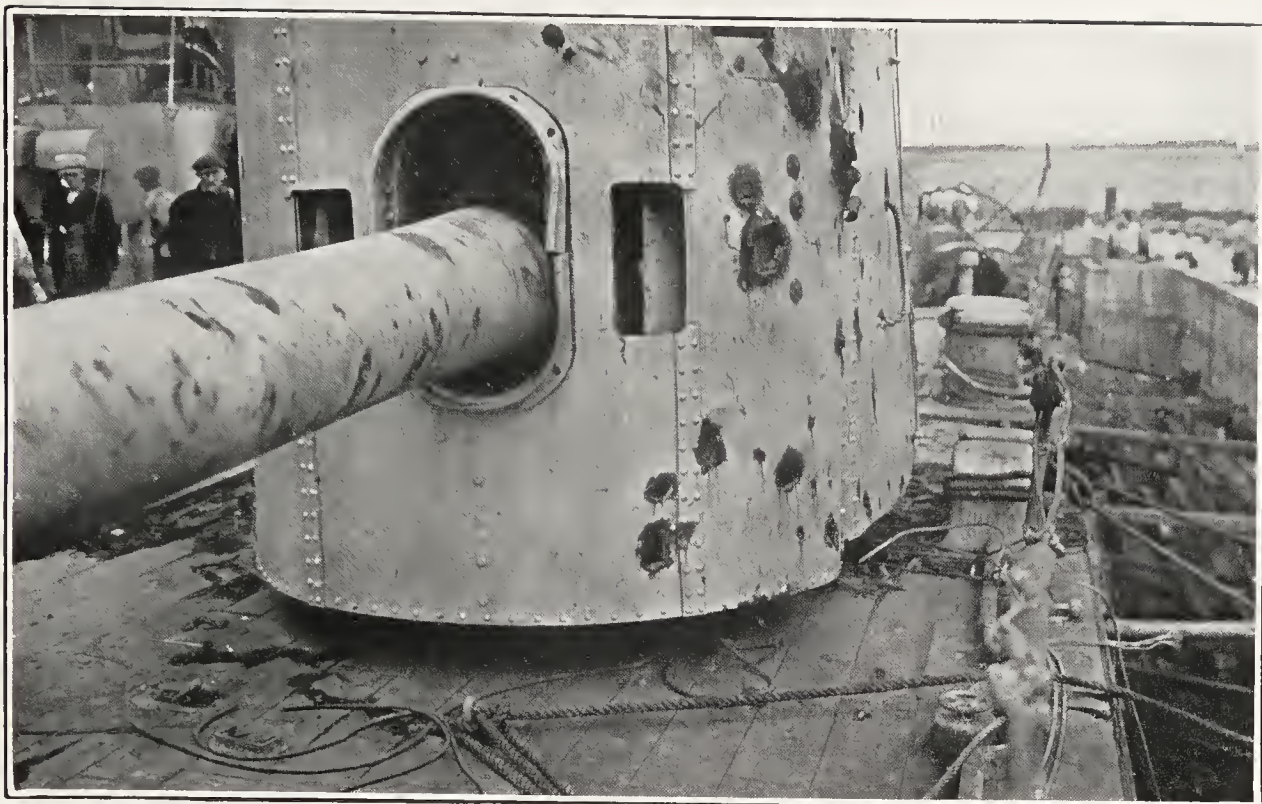
Whilst there a 12-inch shell came into galley and blew down through the deck. A stoker alongside me looked up and said, "There goes my — dinner."

Hopped up to battery deck port side, but found very little damage had been done, and everybody was very cheery. Went along starboard side of mess deck and made 6-inch supply parties spread out more, as they would bunch together so much. While forward was told we had been hit port side aft, so ran aft and found we had been hit under the engineers' office. It looked very bad, as a large triangular piece had been blown out of the top corner of the main belt about a foot above water. The fresh water and oil fuel tanks had been blown to pieces, and everything in an awful state of dust, oil fuel, and mess. Engineers' office completely vanished and deck all bowed upwards. Men trying to plug the hole, but tons of water were coming in and washing them back all the time. As it was all oil fuel, they looked like a lot of goldfish swimming about. A marine remarked, "This will mean a drop of leave."

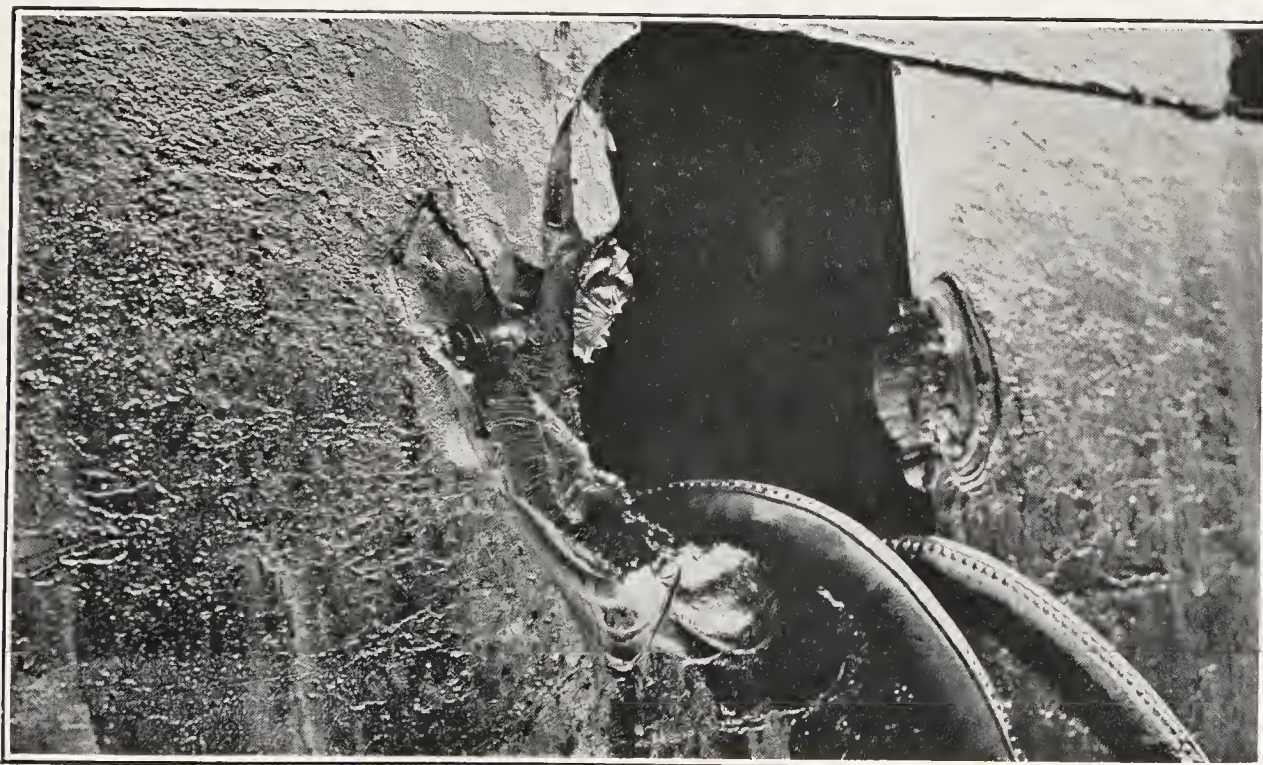
Tried for a bit to plug and shore up with hammocks, but it was hopeless, as the force of the seas was tremendous. Decided to fill the whole compartment with hammocks, and started a strong party doing this. It eventually took nearly 600 hammocks to fill up the compartment, which effectually stopped the trouble, but not till late that night. Body of this shell was afterwards found in the bathroom.

The ventilation trunk to wing engine-room had been badly holed by this shell, and volumes of water were pouring down. Got down inside trunk, and with the Chief's assistance we plugged and shored the hole from inside the trunk with rubber sheets, and stopped water getting below. Went up to battery deck port side and looked through 6-inch control hood. Must have got a direct hit further aft with high explosive, as there was a





"WARSPITE"—No. 7 6-IN. GUN STARBOARD ON THE UPPER DECK.



"WARSPITE"—HIT UNDER ENGINEERS' OFFICE.  
CORNER OF ARMOUR PLATE BLOWN AWAY.

[To face page 70.]





About 5.30 p.m. to 6.0 p.m.

## Experiences in H.M.S. "Warspite."

terrific flash and shock, and I was knocked endways out of 6-inch hood, my eyes full of water and dust. G. thought I was hit, but it was only shock.

Realised it was pretty hot, and that we were getting heavily hit. Went down to mess deck again to see how the hammock party were getting on, and found they had passed a lot of hammocks in, but no signs of bottom yet. Many hammocks were lost washing out through the hole, and it didn't look promising. Crossed to starboard side and a shell burst in battery above. Sheet of flame came down through slits of sliding shutters. Told them to open the shutter with a view to going up the escape to see what had happened, but it was all aglow overhead, so shut it to again. Heard a lot of groaning on battery deck. Went forward to get up fore end, when I was told I was wanted at once, as there was a bad fire on superstructure. A fragment of shell had come through the roof of battery deck and hit the after 6-inch cordite case, containing four charges. As bad luck would have it the cartridge number had a charge half out of the case in his arms, having just received the order to load. This box and four others exploded. Whole of No. 6 gun's crew were frightfully burnt, and several more of No. 5 gun. Luckily it did not spread right along the battery, as it did in the *Malaya*, and the centre line door being shut saved the port battery. The fire was quickly put out, and never took hold of anything really.

As I passed the port war signal station I asked if they knew anything, but they knew nothing, and all their signal halliards were cut. At this time I thought our 6-inch were firing, but I realised afterwards it was only hits on us. The noise was deafening and rather nerve-shattering. You could not hear yourself speak, and had to shout in anybody's ear.

. . . . .

Went up to superstructure by battery deck escape and found the whole place ablaze. All fire mains were cut, and we couldn't get any water up there at all. Signalmen and messengers peering out through slot of conning tower looked like thrushes in a nest, gaping and shouting "Put the fire out." We eventually got a steam main connected and got water, which I got in the neck as they turned it on.

About 6.0 p.m.

The fire had started in the navigator's sea cabin, which was completely gutted; all our swimming collars, about 400 of them, which we kept hung on jack stays near here for use in emergency, were burning, the stench of rubber being perfectly awful. Smouldering wooden uprights of doors kept on breaking out again, so left marines playing the hose. Decks were all warped, and resin under corticine was crackling like burning holly. The upper deck and superstructures looked perfectly awful, holed everywhere. Everything in the fore superstructure was wrecked, and it



looked like a burnt-out factory all blackened and beams twisted everywhere. I think at this time the fire had slackened, but the noise was deafening; shells bursting short threw tons of water overhead.

A 12-inch had come through after funnel, through beef-screen,<sup>1</sup> hit armoured grating over "B" boiler-room, and being deflected upwards, smashed second cutter to matchwood. On its way through the beef-screen it had carried a whole sheep with it, which was wedged into the gratings; at first I thought it was a casualty. Went below again and found a second shell had come into boys' mess deck through the embrasure overhead. Looked outboard through hole in armour on ship's side; looked red, lurid, and beastly; heavy firing all round and splashes everywhere; thought we were steaming slow. Went aft the port side and saw how the plugging was getting on; there was a fair amount of water going down the centre engine-room still, and the plugs kept on washing away from the hole. Everybody was very cheery and anxious for news, which I couldn't give, as I hadn't the faintest idea what was happening. Marines of port 6-inch ammunition supply were playing cards on the deck quite happily.

Got a message that men were in the after steering compartment and could not get out, and water was gaining. I had clean forgotten all about them, and, of course, the shell into the trunk had shaken them; went aft and found the whole trunk full to the level of cabin flat. They reported by telephone that there was 18 inches of water and gaining slowly. Tried to open the door by deck plate in Admiral's lobby, but it was absolutely fixed; realised it was jammed by wreckage from above. Telephoned them to wait and that everything was all peace.

Went forward again to port side of mess deck. Two stokers came to me when I was very busy and begged me to take watches, letters, etc., found on men who had been knocked out. It struck me as so incongruous, as if it mattered a bit when we might all of us go any minute. I told them so, but they were so insistent about it. W. took charge of the things.

Men everywhere were simply splendid and all very cheery. I confess that I myself found it mighty unpleasant and unnerving, although I had plenty to do, but for those who merely had to *wait* it must have been a thousand times worse.

The noise was perfectly appalling, and you couldn't hear at all between decks, and the worst of it was one knew *nothing*.

. . . . .

6.20 p.m.

The steering gear episode was rather extraordinary. I found out the details afterwards. We were turning to form astern of the Grand Fleet battle line, and the helm was apparently put over too quickly, and jammed

<sup>1</sup> Beef-screen—the stowage place for fresh meat.

GRAND FLEET  
BATTLE SQUADRONS  
accompanied by  
Cruisers and Destroyers.

Leading Battleship  
6:19 p.m.

Battle Cruisers

Warspite  
about 6:35

Stopped  
clear of  
gunfire.

Warrior

WARSPITE  
2<sup>nd</sup> Circle

"Barham"

"Valiant"

Helm jambed

1<sup>st</sup> Circle

WARSPITE  
6:19 p.m.

"Malaya"

Rough Diagram to Illustrate  
H.M.S. "WARSPITE'S" CIRCLING  
AT WINDY CORNER.

About 6:20 to 6:30 p.m.

NOT TO SCALE  
Position of British & German  
Battle Fleets is only Approximate.

GERMAN  
FLEET.

## Chap. V.—The 5th Battle Squadron.

at Port 15°.<sup>1</sup> We swung to starboard under *Valiant's* stern, and continued swinging round towards the enemy, getting very close to them. We continued swinging round until we were on a westerly course, when the Captain managed to steady the ship by working the screws. I remember hearing him give some orders about the engines.

The whole leading enemy division concentrated on us during this circling, and we got very heavily hit, and everybody thought we had gone. Huns thought so too, and ceased firing, luckily for us, but they no doubt could not see us for splashes, spray, and smoke. There was a heavy pall of smoke everywhere. Terrific rumbling of heavy firing and the whole horizon lit by orange flashes everywhere; everything blurred and beastly.

I saw the *Agincourt* a long way off firing like blazes, and remember thinking she was going it pretty hard, but that's all I ever saw of the Grand Fleet.

. . . . .  
8.30 p.m.

Went below and was at the port hits again, when I got a message asking could we go 16 knots, and I said "Yes," or it may have been, "What speed can you go?" and I said "16." I don't know which it was anyway. Went aft and tried to square up the hole by port casemate lobby. Got half-a-dozen men to get the dead out of the flat below. Got a message that we were to return to Rosyth. Arranged to get the men a meal as best we could whilst keeping the guns manned. I had no idea whatever as to time, but it was then about 8.30, I believe.

Went on the upper deck and had a look round. Main derrick was shot through and lying across the picket boat, mainmast holed by a 6-inch, and boats all smashed to atoms. Compass platform was riddled by splinters. Big hole starboard side by 6-inch gun, which we covered over with collision mat and nailed down.

Tried to "darken ship" as best we could, but the holes everywhere made this rather hopeless; plugged them with canvas and deck cloths. A 12-inch shell had hit the communication tube of the after director tower, sheared all rivets, and spun the tube through 180 degrees, but only one man was killed and two wounded in the tower above—rather miraculous. "X" turret had a direct hit, looked like an 8-inch, but no damage whatever inside; in fact, they did not know they had been hit.

The boats were a comic sight; launch absolutely smashed to blazes, all Carley rafts except two small ones broken up, and no sound boat left. First picket boat had just been painted, too, and new brass rails round casings were all cut to pieces. Both ladders to quarter deck had gone, and both life buoys blown away by blast from "X" turret.

<sup>1</sup> Port 15° is a considerable amount of helm, sufficient to turn a ship rapidly to starboard. Port 35° is "Hard-a-port," the maximum amount of helm that can be put on, so that it will be understood that the *Warspite* going at full speed with 15° of helm on was taking a big and difficult to control turn to starboard—towards the enemy.



All mainstays had been shot through except one the starboard side. Searchlights had not suffered very badly, except those on after-super-structure ; they were like scrap iron. There were many holes on the quarter deck, rather death-traps.

Where shell hit the deck, planks and fastenings were removed as cleanly as if they had been shovelled away, in several places over an area of 10 or 12 square feet.

. . . . .

*About 9.0 p.m. to midnight.*

Went down to an awkward fire in sick-bay ; could not get along upper deck before the battery, due to dense smoke, even with respirator, etc., on ; even Edes' helmet was no good ; smoke absolutely thick yellow. Went up on foc'sle deck and got through skylight, which we opened to let the smoke out. Eventually got outboard on port forward embrasure with a chief stoker and a hose, and played it over the burning débris and wreckage. We had not had time before the action to strip the sick-bay, and a 12-inch had come clean through from port to starboard, completely wrecking sick-bay, which was in an awful state of confusion, due to fire and water, chemicals, broken glass, etc. Having got this fire out, went and saw fleet surgeon, who was very busy in fore distributing station. Large numbers of burnt men were in a dreadful state.

Went aft and telephoned to after steering compartment asking them how things were ; they said there was 3 feet of water there and gaining slowly. As a matter of fact, this was exaggerated, as there never was more than 2 feet, but the position there certainly couldn't have been pleasant. Got door to them open about a foot, and the three men with old W. came up looking a bit shaken, but none the worse. They had been down there about eight hours, and must have been pretty anxious.

By this time one felt one wanted something inside, so repaired to the ward-room ; found they had got some food of sorts going, sardines and tinned tongue ; everybody was very cheery. A funny hit here ; 6-inch shell had come through ward-room table, making a clean round hole, dented deck, and gone out through other side, having wrecked stove, armchair, and piano. We hope to sell the piano for a good price as a souvenir, although it has no inside left, but the outside is all right.

. . . . .

*Thursday, June 1st.*

At daylight we fell the hands in and went on getting things squared up as best we could. Started carpenters on repairing first cutter, which was the only possible boat, and got mess tables, stools, etc., up to build rafts on the upper deck. Steaming 18 knots, zigzagging. Our standard compass had about 10 degrees' error after the hitting we had got. Gyro all right.

## Chap. V.—The 5th Battle Squadron.

About 6 a.m. Captain sent for me and said he was certain we should be attacked by submarines, and to do all I could to get everything as ready as possible. Got 6-inch gun crews closed up and went on getting rafts, etc., built.

About 8 o'clock two torpedoes were fired at us; one just crossed the bow, the other followed up astern alongside the starboard side. We increased to 21 knots and zigzagged all the time. There was nothing more to be done, as we already had double look-outs and had a lot of officers up in addition.

About 10 a.m. opened fire on a submarine on port quarter, range about 800 yards. Port 6-inch fired about eight rounds at periscope. Captain sent me down to look at shoring by the hits port side and see how it was standing. I went and had a good look, and told him it was all right. This forenoon was, I think, about the worst part of the whole show, as everybody was very much on edge.

From then onwards nothing of special interest happened, and we came safely in. I am bound to say I heaved a sigh of relief as we passed under the Forth Bridge, and the cheers from the troops made one feel quite gulpy.

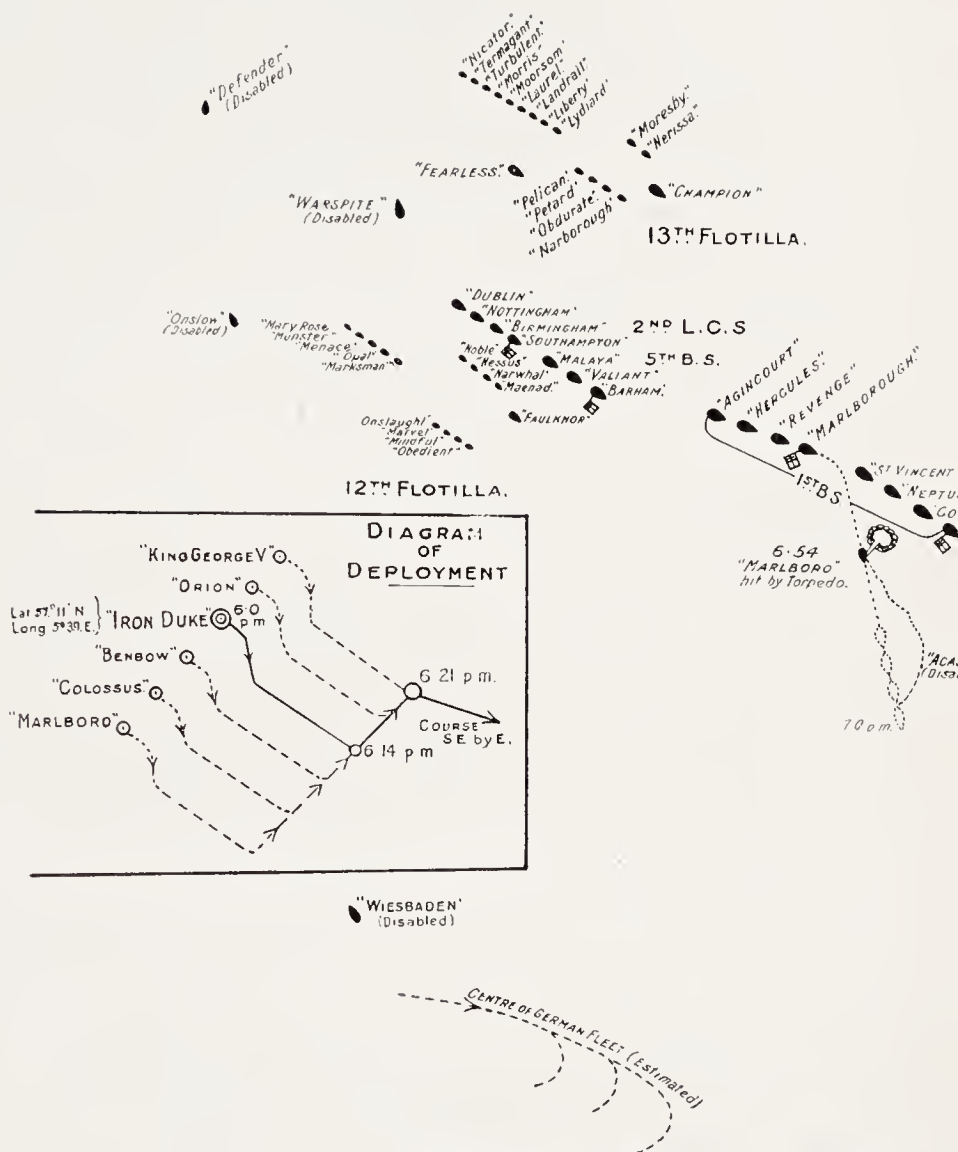
We were drawing about  $35\frac{1}{2}$  feet aft when we docked.











## BATTLE FLEET ACTION

ABOUT 7.0 P.M. 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 1916.

(INSET, DIAGRAM OF DEPLOYMENT AT 6.14.

Note:- The purpose of this plan is to show, very approximately, the position of with relation to each other during the Battle Fleet Action.

In detail the plan is not accurate, but it may be accepted as showing, for example, the Squadron at 7.0 p.m. was at the Van, Rear or on the disengaged side.

The position of the Enemy with regard to our ships is not definitely established.

"IRON DUKE'S" approximate position at 7.0 p.m. was Lat: 57° 04' N Long: 0° 02' E.

At 7.12. p.m. BATTLE FLEET re-formed Single Line Course SOUTH. "KING GEORGE V."

This Plan is principally based upon Jellicoe's "GRAND FLEET," 1914-1916'

"BELLON"

"ODD."  
"SUS."  
"ANGUARD"  
"TEMERAIPI"  
"BELLE"  
"B"  
"4th BS"

## BATTLE FLEET ACTION.

7.0 p.m.

Squadron.

Ship or



## *Phase II.*



# THE BATTLE FLEET ACTION

About 6.0 p.m. to 9.0 p.m.



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## Chapter VI.



### “WINDY CORNER:” THE WRECKING OF ARBUTHNOT’S CRUISER SQUADRON.



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( ABOUT 6.15. P.M.)

( ABOUT 6.15. P.M.)





## CHAPTER VI.

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### “Windy Corner :” The Wrecking of Arbuthnot’s Cruiser Squadron.

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“*They pressed forward with great impatience.*”

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*Extract from Report of Vice-Admiral Sir D. Beatty, Commanding Battle Cruiser Force :—*

“*. . . At 5.50 p.m. British Cruisers were sighted on the port bow and at 5.56 p.m. the leading battleships of the Grand Fleet bearing North 5 miles. I thereupon altered course to East and proceeded at utmost speed. This brought the range of the enemy down to 12,000 yards. . . .*”

*Extract from the Report of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, Commander-in-Chief :—*

“*. . . At 5.45 p.m. the report of guns had become audible to me, and at 5.55 p.m. flashes were visible from ahead round to the starboard beam, although in the mist no ships could be distinguished, and the position of the enemy’s Battle Fleet could not be determined. . . .*

“*I formed the Battle Fleet in line of battle on receipt of Sir David Beatty’s Report (at 6.14 p.m.), and during deployment the fleets became engaged. Sir David Beatty had meanwhile formed the Battle Cruisers ahead of the Battle Fleet. . . .*

“*At 6.6 p.m. the Rear-Admiral commanding 5th Battle Squadron, then in company with the Battle Cruisers, had sighted the starboard wing division of the Battle Fleet. . . . On realising the direction of deployment he was compelled to form astern (of the Battle Fleet), a manœuvre which was well executed by the squadron under a heavy fire from the enemy Battle Fleet. An accident to ‘Warspite’s’ steering gear caused her helm to become jammed temporarily, and took the ship in the direction of the enemy’s line. . . . Clever handling enabled Captain Phillpotts to extricate his ship from a somewhat awkward situation.”*



↑  
"Princess Royal"  
and Destroyer.

↑ ↑  
Splashes  
caused by  
Two Shells.

↑  
"Tiger."

Destroyers.

# JUNCTION OF GRAND FLEET WITH BATTLE CRUISER FLEET AT "WINDY CORNER,"

ABOUT 6.15 P.M.

[To face page 80.





*Extract from the narrative of a Light Cruiser Officer:—*

“The point where all this turning took place has been called ‘Windy Corner.’ It well earned its name.”

It did indeed, for, apart from the risk and excitement of fifteen or twenty large ships and thirty or forty small ships all converging on to a point from every direction, the Germans were concentrating a heavy fire into the ‘brown’ of the turning point, so that “the whole ocean was torn “up by shell splashes, and the noise was terrific.” Every ship was steaming at high speed, and the majority of them were vigorously replying to the German fire by firing their own broadsides over the heads of any light craft that lay between them and the enemy. “We went across the line at 27 knots, the squadron “(1st Light Cruiser Squadron) getting over where best they could—a pretty “piece of seamanship. Just as we were dashing across the bows of ‘Agin- “‘court,’ she fired a salvo over us which fairly lifted us in the water. I don’t “know how many of her fourteen 12-inch guns she fired, but I felt as if my “head was blown off.”

There were also several other incidents occurring simultaneously; for example there was the Grand Fleet, “now well in sight and bearing down in “six columns, gradually deploying to port”; and there was “Lion” and the Battle Cruisers “heavily engaged passing us to starboard at full speed “and making a wonderful picture, a long cloud of smoke pouring out of a “big shell hole in ‘Lion’s’ superstructure forward.” ‘Windy Corner’ indeed from 6.0 to 6.30 p.m. was a strange jumble of ships, shells, and seamanship. “There was handling of ships in that ten minutes of crossing the “battle-fleet’s front such as had never been dreamt of by seamen before.”

Added to all this, there was the incident of H.M.S. “Warspite’s” helm jamming, when “surrounded by shell splashes she steered straight for the “German fleet—columns of water from bursting shells completely surrounded “her, and hid her from our sight. It seemed inevitable that she would blow “up. But then, greatly to our surprise and relief, we saw her suddenly start “to go ahead again, turn on to a steady course towards our line, and re-engage “the enemy with a salvo from all her turrets as if she was in no way the worse “for her little stunt.”

Perhaps the whole scene is best summed up in the words of an Officer of the 5th Battle Squadron:—“Sufficient to say, the general effect outdid “the most imaginative picture of a naval battle that ever I saw.”

### The Loss of H.M.S. “Defence.”

But there was one incident of “Windy Corner” which, alas, was more prominent than even the jumble of ships, or the “stunt” of H.M.S. “Warspite”:—“From ahead out of the mist there appeared the ill-fated 1st Cruiser “Squadron, led by the ‘Defence.’ . . . At first the ‘Defence’ did not “seem to have been damaged, but she was being heavily engaged, and salvos

“were dropping all around her. When she was on our bow three quick salvos reached her, the first one ‘over,’ the next one ‘short,’ and the third all hit. The shells of the last salvo could clearly be seen to hit her just abaft the after turret, and after a second a big red flame flashed up, but died away again at once. The ship heeled to the blow, but quickly righted herself and steamed on again. Then almost immediately followed three more salvos. Again the first was ‘over,’ the second one ‘short,’ and the third a hit, and again the shell of the hitting salvo could be clearly seen to strike, this time between the forecastle turret and the foremost funnel. At once the ship was lost to sight in an enormous black cloud, which rose to a height of some hundred feet, and, quickly clearing, showed no signs of a ship at all.”

(Narrative of H.M.S. “Obedient” of 12th Destroyer Flotilla.)

Dramatic in its suddenness and completeness, the loss of H.M.S. “Defence” must have been witnessed by fifty or more ships of the British Fleet, and stood out perhaps as the most impressive incident of Jutland.

“At about 6.15 p.m. we witnessed the action of the 1st Cruiser Squadron and the blowing up of ‘Defence.’ We thought she had gone about a minute before she finally blew up, as she completely disappeared in a mass of spray, smoke, and flame. But she came through it apparently still intact, only to disappear a few seconds later in a tremendous belch of vivid flame and dense black smoke, from which some dark object, possibly a boat or a funnel, was hurled through space, twirling like a gigantic Catherine-wheel.”

(Narrative of H.M.S. “Colossus,” Battleship.)

“Between 6 and 6.30 p.m. was for us the most eventful time of the whole day. First of all, the 1st Cruiser Squadron (‘Defence,’ etc.) broke through the centre of our Squadron as we made to the eastward. Admiral Arbuthnot’s Squadron then wheeled round to starboard on to a westerly course and opened fire on a German light cruiser which hove in sight on our starboard bow. Apparently Admiral Arbuthnot was anxious to engage any enemy that might turn up, and pressed forward with great impatience. His squadron looked a very fine sight, turning and firing in succession, but almost immediately they found themselves within close range of the German battle cruisers and battleships, and before they could turn away—there was practically no direction clear to which they could turn—they were being concentrated upon by overwhelming gunfire from the enemy ships. The ‘Defence’ and ‘Black Prince’ were beaten and blew up,<sup>1</sup> ‘Warrior’ drifted out of action helpless and in flames, and the only ship of the squadron to escape was the ‘Duke of Edinburgh,’ which hauled away to the northward in time. . . .”

(Narrative of H.M.S. “Yarmouth,” 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron.)

<sup>1</sup> H.M.S. *Black Prince* did not actually founder until several hours later.





LARGE NUMBER OF SHIPS BUNCHED UP AT "WINDY CORNER."





*"A few minutes after we opened fire, the 'Defence' and 'Warrior' appeared on our engaged side steaming on an opposite course. The ships were practically continuously hidden by splashes, they were being repeatedly hit by heavy shell, and must have been going through hell on earth. The 'Defence,' which was leading, was just about abeam of the 'Neptune,' and barely a mile away, when she was hit heavily and blew up in one fearful cloud of smoke and debris. The foretop fell with a sickening splash into the water, and then the 'Warrior,' herself damaged, listing to starboard and in places on fire, raced over the spot where the 'Defence' had been, through the smoke-cloud of her flagship's explosion."*

*(Narrative of H.M.S. "Neptune," 6th battleship from the rear of the line.)*

*Mercifully this death by which the 900 officers and men of the "Defence" perished was an instantaneous one, causing them probably no suffering. We may remember as their epitaph, "They pressed forward with great impatience."*

*In the following chapter are narrated the experiences of H.M.S. "Warrior" and of the seaplane carrier H.M.S. "Engadine," from the time when this ship took H.M.S. "Warrior" in tow and endeavoured to bring her back to harbour, until the time when she was forced to abandon "Warrior" owing to the rising gale.*

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## Narrative of H.M.S. "Warrior."

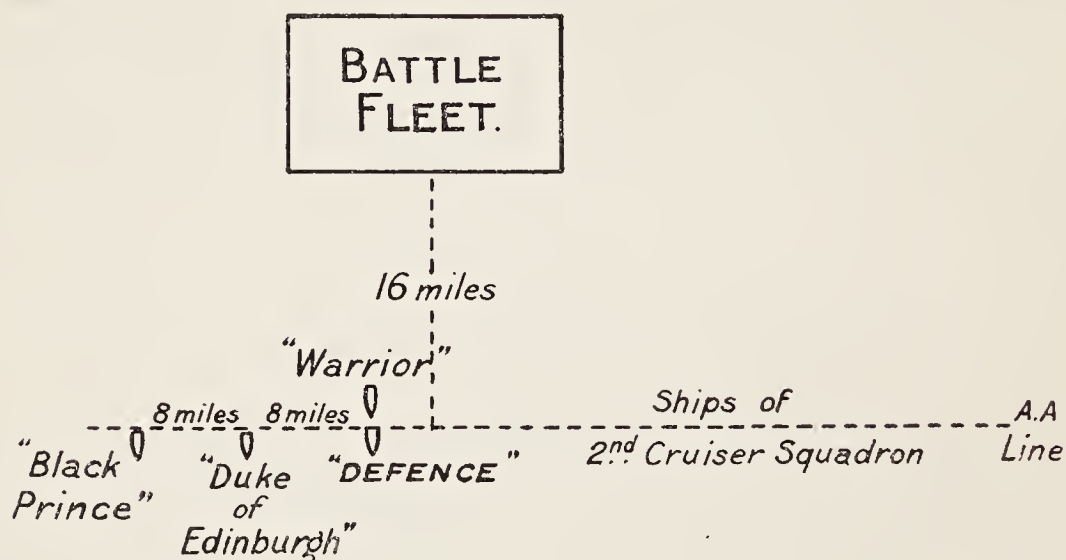
On the afternoon of May 31st the 1st Cruiser Squadron, composed of *Defence* (flag), *Warrior*, *Duke of Edinburgh*, and *Black Prince*, was stationed on the starboard wing of the cruiser screen 10 miles ahead of the battle fleet, in which position it was our special duty to sight and inform the Commander-in-Chief of the position, course, and speed of the enemy's fleet should we at any time make contact with them.

At 3.30 p.m. the signal for action stations was made by Rear-Admiral Sir Robt. Arbuthnot from the *Defence*, and when everything had been reported ready for action on board, I sent the ship's company to tea. From this time onwards intercepted signals showed clearly the reported positions, courses, and speeds of our battle cruiser fleet and of the enemy, and after tea I explained the position of affairs to the Commander, and told him to assemble all hands, inform them that an action was imminent, and give them an idea how matters stood so far as we knew them. As the men closed up at their action stations they cheered with enthusiasm.

At 5.40 p.m., while still 10 miles ahead of our battle fleet, and with speed now increased to 20 knots, gunfire was heard and gun flashes seen about 30 degrees before our starboard beam, but on a bearing west of south, instead of the bearing east of south on which, by plotting the reports

of the enemy from our battle cruisers, we had calculated that we should join the action. The time also was about half an hour earlier than we had expected.

A few minutes later, on almost the same bearing as the gun-flashes, light cruisers belonging to our battle cruiser fleet were sighted closely followed by the battle cruisers, and although no enemy ships were yet in sight, projectiles were observed to be falling round our ships—generally speaking, short of them. At about 5.47 I sighted three or possibly four enemy light cruisers about 20 degrees on my starboard bow, and I now increased speed to 21 knots to close from  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile astern of *Defence*. *Defence* then altered course about 30 degrees to port, bringing the nearest enemy cruiser—the *Wiesbaden*—on to a bearing of Green 80 (80 degrees from right ahead on the starboard side) and signalled “Open fire, ship interval 12 seconds.” Three salvos were fired by each of us



at extreme range under the concentrated pair ship fire organisation which the squadron had worked up, but all the shot falling short, we checked fire, and *Defence* altered course directly towards *Wiesbaden*. At 6.1 p.m. the *Defence* again altered course and brought *Wiesbaden* on to a bearing 40 degrees on the port bow. Just after this the light cruisers of our battle cruiser fleet passed astern, and we came under fire from the enemy light cruisers.

*Defence* and *Warrior* then opened fire, and the second salvo of both ships hit the *Wiesbaden*, setting her on fire, and causing a great escape of steam on board her. In a few minutes she was seen to be stopped, but as she was still in a position favourable for firing torpedoes at our battle cruisers, we, *Defence* and *Warrior*, continued hitting her again and again with our port guns, closing her to within 6,000 yards before turning away. During this time everything seemed to be happening quite naturally and



in order, with nothing surprising nor disconcerting. When both *Defence's* and *Warrior's* second salvos hit the enemy, I remember remarking to the Navigator, "We have never had a practice concentration of fire go off so smoothly and successfully." There seemed to be plenty of time for everything; to give orders, to have them repeated, and to have them reported back executed.

As we closed the *Wiesbaden*, we passed about a mile ahead of our battle cruiser squadron, and came under a heavy fire from the enemy battle cruisers and subsequently from the enemy battleships, but, in spite of being under this heavy fire, we were for some time unable to see the enemy, as they were hidden by mist and smoke, and at no time were there more than three enemy ships visible. It was peculiarly annoying to be having the enemy's heavy salvos falling close to us without being able either to see the ships which were firing, or make a useful report of the position, course, and speed of their battle fleet to the Commander-in-Chief—always the principal duty of a cruiser. I well remember looking back to the north-eastward, and seeing how clearly our battleships showed up in that direction against a bright skyline.

During this fighting *Warrior* was  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile astern of *Defence*, and I twice thought that *Defence* had been hit by the enemy battle cruisers because of sudden puffs of black smoke which came from her. At 6.19 she commenced to turn away to starboard, and was then hit by two salvos in quick succession. Then she blew up and completely disappeared.

The *Warrior* was now between the enemy's battle fleet and our 5th B.S., about one and a half miles from the latter, and steering about  $135^{\circ}$  to starboard of their course. I decided to withdraw and try to follow the 5th B.S., but finding the *Warrior* was fast losing speed, I soon decided that it was hopeless to try to keep station on that squadron, and after giving our first antagonist, the *Wiesbaden*, two final salvos from my starboard guns which appeared to finish her off for she disappeared in a cloud of smoke and steam, I withdrew from the action, zigzagging to avoid the enemy's salvos.

The *Warspite* was then about 2 miles astern of her squadron, having made a large circle towards the enemy as her steering gear had jammed. I had intended to pass astern of her, but finding that she was turning to starboard, I also turned to starboard and passed ahead of her. As she came between the *Warrior* and the enemy battle fleet she drew upon herself all the fire that previously had been concentrated upon us, which undoubtedly saved the *Warrior* from being sunk then and there. This seemed to us to be a particularly gallant act on her part, and it gave us in the *Warrior* much satisfaction to see her replying with all her 15-inch guns to the enemy's fire, in spite of the fact that she was being heavily hit.

After turning away we were still under heavy fire, apparently from three, probably four enemy battleships, judging by the rapidity with which heavy salvos fell close to us, but due to the small spread of their

salvoes which fell in one huge splash, we just escaped time and again being hit although very frequently a whole salvo fell extremely close.

At 6.26 all electrical instruments and hydraulic power for the turrets failed. At 6.30 p.m. I received a report that the starboard engine-room was out of action, but in response to my orders to keep the engines going at all costs, it was reported a minute later that both engines were going ahead slow. Then at 6.35 I received a report that the main topmen's mess deck was on fire, and at 6.40 that the aft deck also was on fire; but by this time we were out of the action steering N.N.W., whilst the rest of our fleet were steering S.E. and soon were out of sight from us.

Receiving the report that all heavy guns were again ready for action in hand-gear—two turrets had been jammed by damage to the deck and there still was no hydraulic power—I ordered submarine look-out stations to be assumed, and soon afterwards a periscope was reported on the port bow, but I could not see it myself nor was any torpedo track observed.

About 6.55 the seaplane carrier, *Engadine*, was sighted to the southwest, and when we recognised her I signalled her to close and stand by the *Warrior* until we could ascertain our damage. We had been hit at least 15 times by heavy projectiles—11-inch or 12-inch—and about 6 times by smaller shells. Fires were raging so badly aft that it was impossible to get access to the engine-room; the whole main deck was full of flame, smoke, and gas from enemy shells; the upper deck was torn to pieces, and every boat was damaged beyond repair. The masts still stood, and so did the funnels, although the rigging had been shot away, and there were many holes in both masts and funnels. But the most serious damage was that caused by an 11-inch or 12-inch projectile which struck us on the water-line on the port side, passed through the after reserve coal bunker, crossed the upper part of the port engine-room, and burst as it went through the middle line bulkhead, leaving most of its gas in the port engine-room, while several large fragments of it were deflected downwards and tore a large hole in the double bottom at the after end of the starboard engine-room. On its way it carried away the transverse auxiliary steam pipe, which caused both engine-rooms to fill with steam.

Five or six shells burst on the main deck, and the majority of the ship's casualties occurred here. In all, there were 68 killed and 34 wounded. Another shell burst on the aft deck, and several more on the upper deck. There were many large rents in the upper deck, one 10 feet by 15 feet large, and the whole of the cabins and structure under the after shelter deck close to the main mast were completely blown away.

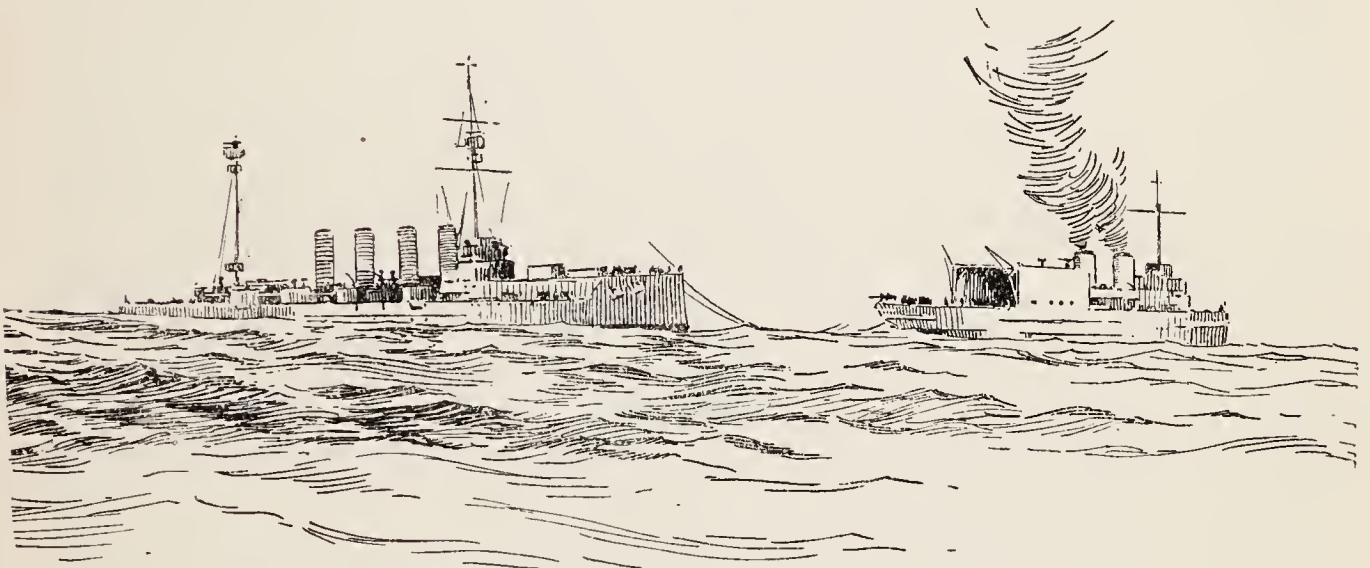
While ascertaining the extent of our damage, I ordered all the spare hands to rig rafts, as the ship was taking a serious list to starboard, and soon afterwards the Engineer Commander reported to me that both engine-rooms were rapidly filling with water, and that the engines must stop before long; also that, while the fires raged and steam was escaping from



several steam pipes, he could not ascertain all the damage nor our prospects of saving the ship.

I then gave orders to draw fires in the boilers and to shut off steam in the boiler-rooms, and signalled to the *Engadine* to take *Warrior* in tow. This operation was carried out very expeditiously, although our 6-inch wire towing hawser was stowed on the main deck in a position very difficult of access, due to the smoke, gas fumes, and corpses. Taking in tow was an exercise that Sir Robt. Arbuthnot had frequently made the ships of his squadron practise, and from this we now profited.

By 9 p.m. we were in tow. All the usual steering gear and communications had been destroyed, and the ship was being steered by hand from the tiller flat, with a field telephone rigged up from the bridge as com-



H.M.S. "ENGADINE" TOWING THE DISABLED "WARRIOR."

munication which proved quite efficient. I directed the *Engadine* to shape course for Cromarty and to proceed at her best speed, which gave us about 8 knots at first, though this was reduced to 6 knots the next morning.

*The following narrative, which is taken almost word for word from a personal journal of the Engineer Officer of the ship, describes the experiences of those stationed between decks in the "Warrior" as their ship "damaged, listing to starboard and in places on fire, raced over the spot "where the 'Defence' had been through the smoke cloud of their flagship's "explosion":—*

Just as I got through the armour door on the main deck, I was met by some other people, including the Boatswain, running back, as



they said we were being straddled by 11-inch shell, and they thought it wasn't very healthy out there. As I turned back I perceived that a shell had come in on the marines' mess deck, from which I had come. A brown smoke was hanging about, and the men of the fire brigade were carrying away three or four poor fellows and laying them down, looking dazed and frightened. I therefore went straight down to the port engine-room to see if anything had happened there. 'M.', the Senior Engineer Lieutenant, told me that they had heard an explosion overhead, and some of the lights had gone out, but apparently there was no serious damage done below. Finding everything going splendidly down there, I decided to return to the starboard engine-room, and I looked into the Engineers' office at the top of the ladder on the way. There, for the last time, I saw my Stoker Secretary sitting at his books as if nothing unusual were happening, but he pointed out to me that they had had a shell in a bit further forward, and going out on to the mess deck I found a great gaping rent in the deck overhead, with the daylight falling weirdly through it.

However there was neither time nor temptation for speculation, and I hurried below again to the starboard engine-room. Shortly afterwards, at about 6.15, I heard a tremendous explosion at the after end, a heavy jar went through the whole fabric, and most of the lights went out. Immediately afterwards there was a heavy roar of water and steam, and my impression was that we had been torpedoed. Several men came running forward from that end, one of them with blood streaming down his face. In that moment I realised fully what cold drawn funk is like. But I had to make a decision, and advancing towards the after end, I tried to gauge the extent of the damage. The engines still went on running, which seemed to show that the cylinders had not been hit, but in the dim uncertain light I perceived what appeared to be Niagara at the after end of the engine-room, though whether the sheet of water was rising up from below or pouring down from above I couldn't be sure at the time. Anyhow, a blast of steam on my face warned me that I hadn't long to think about it, and I soon made up my mind that no pumps could deal with the quantity of water that was coming in, and that the only thing to do was to get the men out as quickly as possible. Not knowing that the other engine-room also was damaged, I gave the order to open the water-tight door on the mid-line bulkhead and to go through to the other side, intending to take charge and control the working of the department from there myself. But the door was screwed hard down and the sprocket chains were greasy, and it struck me that by the time the men had got it open and gone through, the water might be above the sill and would flood the other engine-room before they could get the door closed again, so I ordered all hands up on deck at once. The artificers asked if they should ease or stop the engines, but I said "No," as I guessed that the Captain would want to keep going as long and as fast as possible, and the main steam valves could be shut off from the mess deck if necessary. At first the men didn't know what to do as the ladders at the after end

About 6.15 p.m.

Engine-Room of H.M.S. "Warrior."

were inaccessible, but I shouted to them to go up the midship ladder, and hustled all towards it in front of me. As soon as it appeared that they had all gone up, I followed them myself, but by that time all the lights had gone out, and it was pitch dark.

When I got to the top, knowing it was useless to go aft, I turned forward and felt my way by the handrails along the platform at the tops of the cylinders towards the door at the fore end, which communicated with the port engine-room and with the mess deck. When I got there, however, a stoker told me that we could not get through there, as the mess deck was on fire, and when I tried to do so I was met by a rush of thick smoke and blinding fumes that drove me back. At this moment with this in front and the roar of steam behind me I felt like a trapped rat, for there seemed no possibility of lifting the heavy armour hatches overhead, and a spasm of sheer terror came over me; but just then I realised that the man was calling my attention to a glimmer of light above, and the next minute I found myself climbing out through a torn rent in the deck—the extension of the shell hole I had seen previously from outside our office.

When I got out and looked round, the first thing I saw was a group of men behind the shelter of one of the after turrets trying tentatively to open a fire-main valve on the upper deck. Then I noticed that there were yellow flashes followed by angry reports coming from some ships away on our beam, and shells were whizzing and screaming through the air just above my head, and I decided that this was no place for me. At all costs I must get down to the port engine-room and take charge there, and to that end I made my way to the main deck hatchway; but before I could get half-way down it I was nearly choked with hot, stinging smoke, and had to retreat. I then went further aft and got down to the half-deck, which was partly wrecked, and tried to get through the armour door to the mess deck, but with the same result. Through the smoke and flame I saw a brilliant display of fireworks, where the circuits were fusing in festoons of electric arcs.

Finding this route hopeless, I went along the upper deck again and tried to reach the mess deck from the fore side, but here again any attempt to approach the burning compartment was completely frustrated. I then endeavoured to collect my scattered wits with a view to putting out the fire, but I found that I had the greatest difficulty in getting my brain to work at all. I have heard other fellows say that they have been seized with this temporary mental paralysis, which seems to last for ages, but really lasts for moments only. On such occasions when it is difficult to originate anything, evolutions rehearsed at drill work automatically, and at this moment I found my subordinates readier than myself in carrying out measures that I had myself devised.

By this time some of the forward section of the fire brigade had arrived—nearly the whole of the after section of the brigade were knocked out in the burning compartment. It then occurred to me that I had better



let the Captain know how things stood, and if possible get him to communicate with the port engine-room and tell them to keep the fire engines going full bore. As I got up to the conning tower I perceived that we were practically alone on the sea, and steaming along at about 15 knots.

It was now a little after half-past six, and for the next two hours we fought and struggled to put that fire out. It had got a firm hold in the gunnery office, where the papers, desks, and shelves burned fiercely till the steel partitions were red hot, and the paint on the sides and the corticene on the deck outside were all flaring. The heart of the fire was inside, round a corner where no hose could reach it, and to enter the compartment was like going into an oven, and you simply could not get there. One of the most heart-rending experiences was when I passed along the half-deck on one occasion by the wrecked hatchway, and one poor fellow, who was lying there wounded, held out his arms to me and begged me to help him out. But I dared not stop. We didn't know when the ship might go down under us, and it was my job to keep her afloat if possible. So I had to pass on, hoping that someone else would give him a helping hand. By this time volumes of steam were roaring out of the ventilators to the port engine-room, and the agonising conviction came over me that 'M' must be done for, since, as I told the Captain, nobody could be alive down there now. We had lifted some of the upper hatches, but before we could climb down to open the lower ones into the engine-room we were met with smoke and fire, and could not get near them. The steam from the engine-room also blew across the entrance to the mess deck, further impeding all access to the fire. In fact, we couldn't get at the fire because of the steam from the engine-room, and we couldn't get at the engine-room because of the fire, which was becoming a furnace, and at last I went to the Captain and asked permission to draw the fires in the stokeholds and shut off the boilers from there.

Even so, it was a long time before we could put the fire under on the mess deck, and it was eventually checked by a man climbing down the ship's side and playing the hose in through the hole made by the shell that had caused the fire! It was about 9 o'clock before we could lift one of the armoured hatches, and then, to our amazement, we heard people shouting. I rushed round to the engine-room ladder way, and there I found 'M.' who had just been helped out. I helped him along to the ward-room and put him in an armchair and gave him my brandy flask, which he wanted badly, while he told his story.<sup>1</sup>

He told me that the shell which had driven us out of the starboard engine-room came through both engine-rooms and burst at the mid-line, leaving most of its gas in the port engine-room, where he was. He was knocked down by the concussion, but got up and tried to see what could be

<sup>1</sup> What follows has been supplemented slightly from the report of his experiences which he wrote after the action.



done. He found it impossible to escape by any of the ladders, and as they were getting choked by the fumes and the steam, he tried and succeeded in doing what I had tried and failed to do—namely, to open the mid-line door to the starboard engine-room just after we had gone up. By the time they had closed the door they found, by the glimmer of the sole remaining oil lamp, that the water was coming over the floor plates, and the crank pits were full up and the cranks were swishing round in the middle of it. He said that he had not realised the fact that we were making water fast until a cold feeling round the ankles awoke him to the true state of affairs.

Not realising the full extent of the damage here, he first tried to put the pumps on, but soon found that hopeless. Then he tried to ease the engines and shut off steam, fearing further accidents, but by this time the water was breast high over the floor plates, and he decided that the only thing to do was to clear out. But by this time the ladders were inaccessible as the floor plates were dislodged, and there was every chance of being drawn into the swirl of the racing cranks. They climbed up over pipes and condensers, holding hands to prevent the swirling water carrying them away. Unfortunately their chain was twice broken, with the result that several men were jammed somehow and drowned. The remainder climbed from one vantage point to another as the water rose till they reached the upper gratings, but by this time it was quite dark, and having no purchase anywhere they could not dislodge the gratings overhead, and found themselves apparently doomed to certain death. Not only were they expecting to be drowned, but escaping steam almost suffocated them, and they kept splashing the oily water over their faces to keep them from being peeled. Some men had wrapped scarves round their heads to protect themselves, and all kept as much of their bodies as they could in the water. The surprising thing was that the engines went on working till the water was half-way up the cylinders, and only stopped then because the boilers were shut off. And this agony of terror went on for nearly two and a half hours in pitch darkness and apparent hopelessness before they were rescued. How 'M.' himself behaved I can only shrewdly guess, but there was one other man there, a stoker petty officer named 'K.,' who absolutely refused to recognise the horror of the situation, and kept talking and cheering them all up to the very end. At the start there were about eight of them, and they kept hold of each other to save their lives as long as possible, but one by one they kept dropping off and getting lost and drowned in the water, till at the last there were only three of them left. 'M.' himself would have been lost, having slipped from his hold and finding himself being drawn down into the machinery, but 'K.' held on to him and kept him up until he recovered somewhat. They thought at one time that the ship had been abandoned, but the click of a valve being worked conquered their fears of that. Then they felt a noticeably cold stream of water coming in, which they stirred up as much

as possible, and from this apparently they had the idea that the ship must be under weigh, and therefore in tow of someone, which encouraged them.

At last they heard some order being "piped" round the ship, and they all shouted together, and this led to their rescue. And, by Jove, I was thankful to see 'M' when they got him out.

. . . . .  
(Continuation of the Narrative of the Commanding Officer.)

It grew dark about 9.30 p.m., and the barometer then started falling rapidly, so that our prospects of getting home were none too bright, but all hands worked with a will at stopping leaks and at shoring up bulkheads. After dark I made a personal examination of our damages, and of the steps that had been taken to cope with them. I felt that, if the weather remained fine and the sea smooth, there was a sporting chance of saving the ship, and that at any rate she would keep afloat during the dark hours; we intercepted wireless signals reporting that tugs were on their way out from Cromarty to assist us.

Every two hours the amount that the water had risen in the engine-room was reported to me. It ceased to rise from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m., but after 4 a.m. the wind and sea rapidly got up and the water gained fast. At 6 a.m., and again at 7.15 a.m., I made a tour below, as a result of which I was forced to the conclusion that nothing we could now do would save the ship. The water was gaining beyond our control, and the ship was no longer answering to the motion of the sea but was beginning to roll in a way that showed her stability was fast disappearing, due to the huge quantity of water on the main deck. I ordered the Engineer Commander, the Commander, and the Senior unwounded Lieut.-Commander to go round below and report to me their opinion of the prospect of being able to keep the ship afloat. They all agreed that at any moment she might sink, and that she could not last more than a couple of hours. The barometer was falling fast and the wind and sea were rapidly rising, so I hoisted the signal which I had previously arranged with *Engadine*, to indicate to her that she was to cast off the tow and come alongside the *Warrior* for us to abandon ship.

All the wounded were got up in cots or stretchers; the ship's company were fallen in by divisions, and after all the wounded had been transferred to the *Engadine*, the men clambered on board her, one division at a time. One of the wounded was lost overboard between the two ships, but his body was recovered by Flight-Lieut. Rutland, of *Engadine*, in a most gallant manner, for which action Rutland was later rewarded the Albert Medal. It was this same officer who had reported the enemy's movements from a seaplane the previous day.

Finally the Commander reported all hands were on board the *Engadine*, and he and I then jumped on board, and the *Engadine* went astern to clear the sinking ship. As we left the old *Warrior* we gave her three hearty



cheers. Every big sea washed over her decks, and water poured down through the huge rents in the upper deck on to the main deck. As all the steam pumps and all but two of the hand pumps had been destroyed by enemy shells, we had no means of coping with the volume of water pouring into the ship, and the upper deck was now only about 2 to 4 feet above water. The whole main deck was flooded, and the ship was very much down by the stern.

The behaviour of officers and men had been splendid throughout. All had worked, not only with the utmost zeal, but most cheerily, and even as if they were thoroughly enjoying themselves. As we had passed out of action and had seen our battle fleet firing with rapid regularity, we had all felt that the German fleet was going to be destroyed, and that the loss of the *Defence* and *Warrior* would be a small item compared with the loss that the German fleet would suffer. We felt that the old *Warrior* had made a gallant fight against great odds, and had disabled and almost certainly destroyed one enemy ship before she herself was disabled.

So we left the old ship with three hearty cheers, and the *Engadine* shaped course for Rosyth.

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*The following account by one of "Engadine's" officers describes the abandoning of the "Warrior," and tells in detail for the first time of the disciplined courage displayed by the crew of the "Warrior" on this occasion.<sup>1</sup>*

## The Abandoning of H.M.S. "Warrior."

### A Narrative from H.M.S. "Engadine."

During the night a sea got up, and the *Warrior* had taken in so much water that it was decided to abandon her. The sea was bad: the little *Engadine* bobbed about like a cork, and the *Warrior* was moving in every direction as if she was loth to give up the fight, but knew that she was doomed. Her crew were fallen in on her deck, well back from the ship's side against the funnel casing, looking as indifferent to their danger as men possibly can. They had been like this all the time overnight, working for the several hours it took to get the ship in tow as calmly as if it was all an exercise, although the ship at that time was still on the battlefield open to attack by surface ship or submarine, and with all her damage from shell fire was liable to founder at any time.

<sup>1</sup> This account inevitably recalls the story of the sinking of the *Birkenhead* in 1852. But how strangely Time rings in her changes. The then King of Prussia caused the account of the British soldiers' and sailors' discipline to be read aloud to every regiment in Prussia as an example of true soldierly bearing in the face of great danger.



The risk of *Engadine* going alongside *Warrior* to take off the crew was tremendous, but there was no hesitation on the part of the Captain, and the crew were with him to a man. The starboard side of *Warrior* was tried first, but looked too bad: so the port side was then tried, but it looked worse. The *Engadine* then lay off the starboard quarter of *Warrior*, which must have taxed the nerves of the *Warrior's* crew to the uttermost seeing, after all they had gone through, that apparently they had now either to swim through this seaway to the *Engadine* or else go down with the ship. Those that had collected pieces of enemy shells as souvenirs, I was told, quietly placed them on one side, in order that they might have less weight to carry on their swim.

The *Engadine*, however, was only waiting for the *Warrior's* yawing from side to side to steady a little before attempting to get alongside her again on the starboard side, the side which had been looked at first. After a few minutes, which must have seemed hours to the *Warrior's* men, the *Engadine* was placed alongside, in a manner which I think was agreed by all to be a wonderful piece of seamanship. The ships were made fast together, but worked against each other most viciously; yet all the *Warrior's* men remained steady waiting their Captain's order to abandon ship. Then the Captain gave the order, and things moved. Each man's ration of bully beef and bread was hurled on board us, and one large mass of men poured over the nettings into the ship.

At this moment the Captain considered that there was too much haste, and he ordered the bugle "Still" to be sounded. The result was wonderful.

Not a single man passed from the *Warrior* to the *Engadine* after this bugle was sounded, but every man fell back from the ship's side against the funnel casing, just as they would have done if the bugle call had been sounded at drill. It was a wonderful sight—an inspiring sight; a triumph of organisation, discipline, and courage combined. I am not ashamed to say it brought tears to my eyes. Every man in the *Warrior* must feel proud of being one of such a ship's company.



"STILL"



"CARRY ON"

When the "Carry On" was sounded, all those still left in the *Warrior* hastened to abandon ship. The wounded were got across, and finally the officers, and lastly the Captain, all of whom kept up the highest traditions and the highest standard of courage.

Three cheers were given for their old ship as we parted, and the *Engadine* left with only a small hole in the engine-room, and the boat deck a little damaged by the *Warrior's* guns and davits. The thing that impressed me most, both during and after the action, was the wonderful morale of the officers and men.

## Chapter VII.



### BATTLE FLEET ACTION.



#### Narratives from

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H.M.S. <i>Colossus</i> (17th Ship in the Line), - -	103
H.M.S. <i>Castor</i> (Light Cruiser at the Van of the Battle Line), - - - - -	108

## THE BATTLE FLEET.

*The moment we have waited long  
Is closing on us fast,  
When, cutting short the turret-gong,  
We'll hear the Cordite's Battle-song  
That hails the Day at last.*

*The clashing rams come driving forth  
To meet the waiting shell,  
And far away to East and North  
Our targets steam to meet Thy Wrath,  
And dare the gates of Hell.*

*We do not ask Thee, Lord, to-day  
To stay the sinking sun—  
But hear Thy steel-clad servants pray,  
And keep, O Lord, Thy mists away  
Until Thy work is done.*

—KLAXON.



## CHAPTER VII.

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### Battle Fleet Action.

(See Plan facing page 77.)

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Extract from Commander-in-Chief's Despatch:—

#### “DETAILS OF THE BATTLE FLEET ACTION.

“ . . . The First Battle Squadron, under Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Burney, came into action at 6.15 p.m. with the enemy's Third Battle Squadron, at a range of about 11,000 yards, and administered severe punishment both to the battleships and to the battle cruisers and light cruisers which were also engaged. The fire of ‘Marlborough’ (Captain George P. Ross) was particularly rapid and effective. . . .

“ . . . The range decreased during the course of the action to 9,000 yards. The First Battle Squadron received more of the enemy's return fire than the remainder of the battle fleet, with the exception of the Fifth Battle Squadron. ‘Colossus’ was hit, but not seriously damaged, and other ships were straddled with fair frequency.

“In the Fourth Battle Squadron—in which squadron my flagship, ‘Iron Duke,’ was placed—Vice-Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, leading one of the divisions, the enemy engaged was the Third Squadron and some of the battle cruisers, as well as disabled cruisers and light cruisers. The mist rendered range-taking a difficult matter, but the fire of the squadron was effective. ‘Iron Duke,’ having previously fired at a light cruiser between the lines, opened fire at 6.30 p.m. on a battleship of the ‘Konig’ class at a range of 12,000 yards. . . .

“The fire of the other ships of the squadron was principally directed at enemy battle cruisers and cruisers as they appeared out of the mist. Hits were observed to take effect on several ships.

“The ships of the Second Battle Squadron, under Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Jerram, were in action with vessels of the ‘Kaiser’ or ‘Konig’ classes between 6.30 and 7.20 p.m., and fired also at an enemy battle cruiser which had apparently dropped back severely damaged. At 9.0 p.m. the enemy were entirely out of sight. . . .”

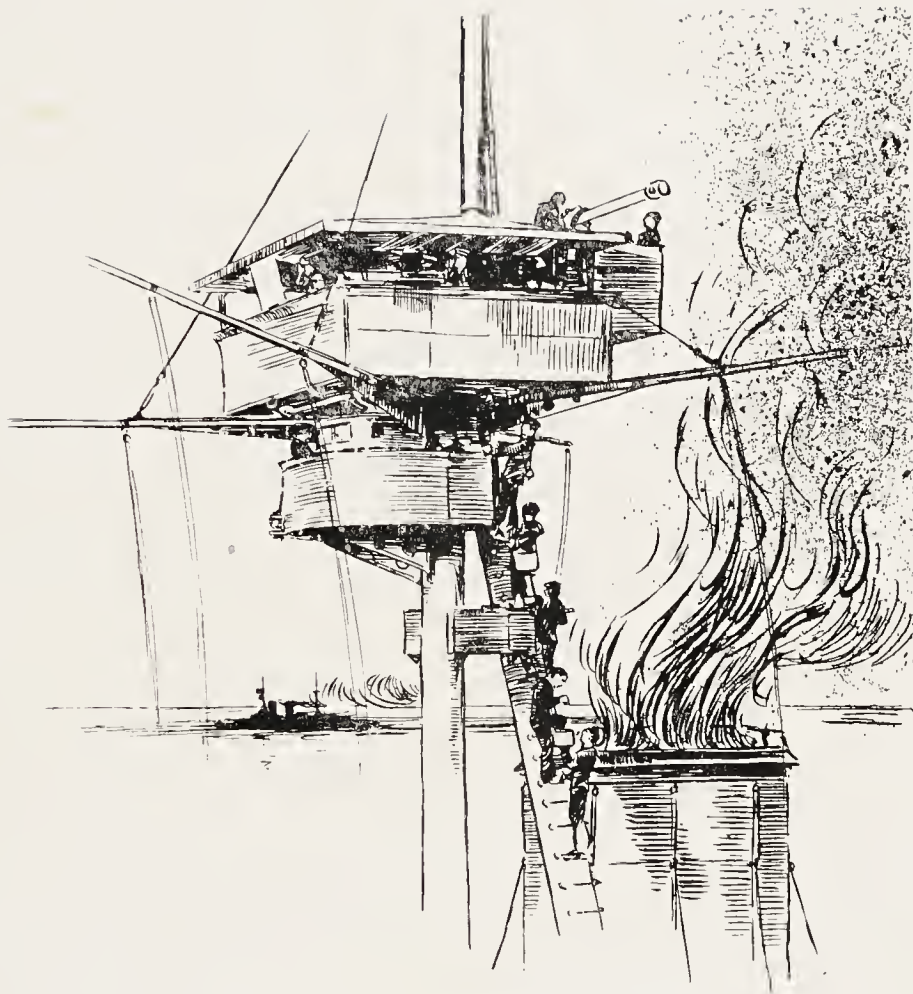
## Narrative of a Midshipman Stationed in the Fore-top of H.M.S. "Neptune."

(19th Ship in the Battle Line, 6th Ship from the Rear).

My action station was in the control top, some 60 or 70 feet above the upper deck, access to which could be gained either by ascending an interminably long iron ladder running up the interior of the mast, or by climbing up outside the tripod by means of iron rungs rivetted on the struts. Experience of the difficulties of ascent had induced me some time ago to have made a blue jean bag, in whose capacious interior I always kept the thousand and one gadgets so essential for the proper and comfortable fighting of an action—ear protectors, binoculars, a stop watch, a pistol, a camera, a respirator, sundry scarves, woollen helmet, and so forth. It was armed with this weighty "battle-bag" that I clambered up the starboard strut of the foremast, past the steam siren (which sizzled ominously as one approached it; it is an abominable experience to have a siren actually siren when you are near to it!), through a belt of hot acrid funnel smoke, and finally into the top through the "lubber's" hole.

The fleet was steaming in six columns of four ships each, and with the attendant destroyers, stretched as far as the eye could see. The course was approximately south-east. The sea was fairly smooth, and the visibility about 17,000 yards. The arrival of the gunnery officer completed our crew, the manholes were shut down, and after the preliminary testing of communications had been done, the turrets were trained out on the beam, and we settled down to a long wait. If the powers that be knew that there was anything in the wind, I must say they kept it to themselves very well. The first inkling that I received that there might soon be something doing was when I noticed that some of the older ships of the 1st Battle Squadron were finding it difficult to keep up with their younger sisters in the other squadrons. Messages of encouragement and regret were passed to them, but still the fleet swept on. Shortly afterwards I noticed that several ships were flying, instead of the customary one ensign, three or four ensigns from various parts of the rigging, and, sure enough, the squeak of our halliard blocks announced that we were following suit. I don't know who started it, but in about ten minutes the air seemed to be thick with white ensigns, large and small, silk and bunting, hoisted wherever halliards could be rove.

By about 5.30 p.m. we had still seen nothing of the enemy, although we had received, and eagerly read, messages from the battle cruiser force telling us that the Germans were out and were in close action with our battle cruisers and with the 5th B.S. Soon afterwards all hands were



“AWAY ALOFT.”

[DWS]

[To face page 98.]





sent to tea, and I was left alone in the fore-top as look-out, but five minutes after the last man had left, the sound of gunfire, heavy gunfire, came from the south. A minute later five columns of smoke appeared on the starboard bow and the flashes of guns became visible. All hands came running back to their stations; meanwhile the situation developed with startling rapidity.

Beatty's battle cruisers, for such the five columns of smoke proved to be, came into sight steaming at high speed to the north-east, and firing heavily towards the southward at an enemy which was out of our sight. Hood's squadron of *Invincible*, *Indomitable*, and *Inflexible* had gone on ahead to join Beatty. The leading ship of Beatty's squadron, *Lion* it was I suppose, seemed to be on fire forward, and the other ships all appeared to have received some damage. The noise rapidly became almost deafening. The *Lion* was leading her squadron across the front of the battle squadrons within 3 miles of the leading battleships, and accordingly the battle fleet reduced to 12 knots to allow them to cross and drive aside the German battle cruisers. The High Seas Fleet had not yet sighted the Grand Fleet, and were still steaming towards us.

Shortly after 6 o'clock the flashes of the guns of the High Seas Fleet became visible, and the Grand Fleet commenced to deploy to port, turning to north-east and then to east-south-east, so bringing our starboard broadsides to bear on the enemy. The *Marlborough* was the battleship leading the starboard wing column of the fleet, and was, therefore, the nearest battleship to the enemy, and the first to open fire. The remainder of the fleet followed suit as soon as they had deployed. I shall not easily forget the dramatic atmosphere of the initial phase of the battle. The effect of the order "Load" was to create a sort of stupor, everything was happening so suddenly, it all seemed too good to be true. The opening salvo of the *Marlborough* brought an end to that unpleasant period of comparative inactivity, and thereafter our hands were full. My impressions of the following hour were naturally somewhat vague, there was so much to do, and so much to see. I remember the dreary monotone of the range-finder operator calling out the ranges, I remember the gunnery officer and the Captain discussing through the voice-pipe the advisability of withholding fire until the ammunition could be most effectively used. I remember training my Dumaresq<sup>1</sup> on to the target—a battle cruiser of the *Lutzow* class—and working out the "rate," which was probably much in error. I remember the ecstatic comments of the director layer in the tower below us when we had found the target and later saw that we were hitting, and I well remember the opening salvo from our guns, in earnest at last.

A few minutes after we opened fire, the *Defence* and *Warrior* appeared on our engaged side, steaming on an opposite course. The ships were practically continuously hidden by splashes, were being repeatedly hit by heavy shells, and must have been going through hell on earth. The *Defence*, which was leading, was just about abeam of the *Neptune* and barely a mile

<sup>1</sup> An instrument for calculating the rate at which two ships are opening or closing each other.

away, when she was hit heavily and blew up in one fearful cloud of smoke and débris. The fore-top fell with a sickening splash into the water and then the *Warrior*, herself damaged, listing to starboard and in places on fire, raced over the spot where the *Defence* had been only a moment before, through the smoke cloud of *Defence's* explosion.

The two fleets were now heavily engaged, but the enemy were rapidly becoming more indistinct in the gathering haze, which was so soon to end the action. Whether this failure of visibility was just North Sea cussedness, or whether it was due to the heavy and continual gunfire I cannot say, but if it had not been for the flashes of the enemy's guns we should have had difficulty in picking out any target.

It is a curious sensation being under heavy fire at a long range. The time of flight seems more like 30 minutes than the 30 or so seconds that it actually is. A great rippling gush of flame breaks out from the enemy's guns some miles away, and then follows a pause, during which one can reflect that somewhere in that great "no man's land" 2 or 3 tons of metal and explosive are hurtling towards one. The mountainous splashes which announce the arrival of each successive salvo rise simultaneously in bunches of four or five to an immense height. One or two salvos fell short of us early in the action, and the remainder, I suppose, must have gone over as I did not see them. The *Hercules*, four ships astern of us, had been straddled on deployment, a feat which had greatly impressed me with the capabilities of the German gunnery, but, with the exception of the *Colossus* which received a 12-inch shell in the fore-superstructure and sundry small stuff round about her fo'c'sle, no single battleship suffered any real damage from the German's gunfire. The enemy however clearly received some punishment as two battle cruisers, which were rather closer than were their other ships, were engaged by us and by most ships of the rear squadron at one time or another, and we saw at least two of our salvos hit, after which the two enemy battle cruisers dropped astern, to all appearances badly damaged. The warm, red glow of a "hit" is easily distinguishable from the flash of a salvo, and is extremely pleasant to look upon.

Our fleet was stretched out in one long, single line, and presented a marvellously impressive spectacle as salvo after salvo rolled out along the line, adding to the fearful din which the enemy's shells and various other battle factors were already making. At 6.20 we were firing at 12,000 yards with common and lyddite shells. About this time the *Invincible*, which was leading the whole line, was struck by a salvo, turned nearly 180 degrees to starboard in her death agony, and lay burning and helpless. Her back was broken and her fore part was twisted round and upside down, giving her, when shortly afterwards we passed her 150 yards distant on our disengaged side, the appearance of having a swan bow. At the time we couldn't identify what ship it was. [6.32 p.m.].



German destroyers were now (about 6.40 p.m.?) observed ahead of the German battle cruiser *Lutzow*, and soon afterwards they turned towards us to attack. Our secondary armament opened fire and scored a hit or two, but their attack was successfully made and a number of torpedoes were fired, which gave us a few anxious minutes. One torpedo crossed the line immediately under *Neptune's* stern, and directly afterwards two other parallel tracks were spotted which seemed to be coming straight for us. The ship was turned under full helm and our stern put towards the track of the torpedoes, but we only avoided being hit by inches.<sup>1</sup>

About this time several other battleships besides the *Neptune* were hauling out of the line dodging torpedoes, with the result that the line became considerably lengthened, and was irregular in places where ships were trying to regain their station. We had dropped astern, and for some seven minutes the *St. Vincent* was directly between us and the enemy, and we were unable to fire. Just after we had successfully dodged the torpedoes, we heard, or more exactly perhaps felt, a dull concussion and saw the *Marlborough* haul out of the line to port listing heavily. She had been hit by a torpedo, but a few minutes later she regained her position in the line with only a slight list, and we saw her firing again strongly.

I remember several small events which happened about now, but I cannot give the exact time of them. We fired a few rounds at a German light cruiser which was lying disabled between the lines, a target for a number of our battleships that were unable to see the enemy big ships clearly. She was in a sorry condition, minus her foremast and one funnel, blazing fore and aft and apparently almost sinking. She must have been no more than a floating shambles, and we only fired two salvos at her. They said afterwards that she was probably the *Rostock*.<sup>2</sup>

We passed a disabled destroyer on our starboard bow, very close to us, but she was one of ours—the *Acasta*. She was badly holed forward and aft and was much down by the bows, but the crew were clustered aft cheering us and the other ships as we passed, and then she disappeared astern rolling heavily in the wash of the battle fleet but with her ensign still flying, apparently not "done for" yet.

. . . . .

The visibility now was fast going from bad to worse. A few fires in the enemy ships and an occasional burst of firing pointed out what was presumably the German Fleet, now to the *westward* of us; but I suppose that about this time it was decided that it was impossible to continue the big ship action in the twilight and dark and, as we were between the enemy and Germany, that we should wait

<sup>1</sup> The full account of this "dodging" has been separated from the narrative and will be found in Chapter VIII., "German Destroyer Attacks," page 116.

<sup>2</sup> *Rostock* was sunk during the night. Probably was the *Wiesbaden*.—*Ed.*

## Chap. VII.—The Battle Fleet Action.

until the next morning. The Grand Fleet must have been practically invisible to the German ships for some little time now, for as we worked round to the eastward of them they were silhouetted against the light of the sunset whilst our background was a mass of dark cloud.

At 11.0 p.m. I got down from the top for a spell. There was an awful litter of stuff everywhere between decks, chiefly made by the shock of our broadsides dislodging loosely stowed gear. I found the gunnery lieutenant gazing into his cabin, speechless, for the electric radiator had been overwhelmed by the tin bath landing on it from above, all the drawers had shaken out, and his clothes were in a *mêlée* on the floor with much other odd matter. Moreover, the fire brigade party, zealous to guard against the chance of the cabin catching fire, had played their hose into the midst, thoughtfully filling the bath at the same time.

We had a comic supper in the gun-room, everybody talking at once and trying to eat at the same time. The inevitable gramophone was recovered from a temporary stowage which it had found on the deck, and well-worn tunes were once more played. About ten minutes to midnight a messenger came in, looking as dirty and weird as a traveller from the infernal regions, to report that all hands would go to action stations again at 2 a.m. Till then we tried to sleep, but thoughts of that torpedo almost hitting us, of the *Acasta*, of the *Marlborough*, of the shapeless hump of the *Invincible*, and all the other incidents of the action, made any sleep difficult. And there was always the question paramount in our thoughts, "When should we renew the action? Would it be at any moment now during the night, at point blank range in the darkness, or at daylight to-morrow?"

At 2 a.m. we were all back at our action stations, the same lot of us in the top as yesterday, but we met no enemy ships, only a Zeppelin airship. Soon after noon, June 1st, the ship's company were dispersed from action stations, and I descended with my "battle-bag," having been seventeen hours in the top. I was obsessed with a sudden desire for sleep, and lots of it, but on arrival in the gun-room I found that the same idea had apparently occurred to the others, for all the settees and chairs were full of sleepers, unshaved, unkempt, and unwashed. So I took a place on the deck.

When we got back to Scapa we had a long coaling, then had to get in ammunition, and also there was some oil fuel to see about. The papers next morning said nothing about any naval activity, and we were not allowed to mention anything of it in our letters, but three days later we received the papers of the 3rd June, and were horrified to read the Admiralty statement of our losses and the incomplete list of the German losses. When we heard that our seamen going to hospital had been jeered at and "boo'ed" by some shore folk, it was almost too much—but to talk about that is perhaps not within my province.





*"The clashing rains come driving forth  
To meet the waiting shell."*

PART OF GRAND FLEET OPERATING IN NORTH SEA.





## Narrative from H.M.S. "Colossus."

(Leading Ship of Rear Battle Squadron (1st B.S.); 17th Ship in the Battle Line).

The *Colossus* (Capt. A. D. P. R. Pound) at Jutland was flying the flag of Rear Admiral E. F. A. Gaunt, C.M.G., as Rear-Admiral in the 1st Battle Squadron, his division consisting of *Colossus*, *Collingwood*, *Neptune*, and *St. Vincent*, stationed in the order named.

At approximately 6 p.m. the battle fleet deployed to port, thus putting the *Colossus* as leading ship of the 1st Battle Squadron and 17th ship in the line. The deployment was a most wonderful sight, but so many things were happening almost simultaneously that it is very hard to give a really connected account of what occurred. For this reason I append a chronological table of events, as taken down by the Admiral's Secretary who was on the fore-bridge throughout the action.

Two things stand out very clearly in my memory of the deployment. First, the extraordinary clearness with which we were able to see a large shell which ricocheted over, and which was painted yellow with a black band. It was, I think, the first shell to come anywhere appreciably close to us. And, second, the masterly way in which some light cruisers (I think the *Calliope's* squadron) cut through the lines at full speed, one of them passing only a few yards across our bows as we turned to port into battle line.<sup>1</sup> We passed quite close to the *Lion*, which was heavily engaged and showed plain evidence of what she had been through. She appeared to be on fire the port side forward, abreast "A" turret.

At about 6.15 p.m. we witnessed the action of the 1st Cruiser Squadron and the blowing up of *Defence*. Almost simultaneously with *Defence's* disappearance a heavy salvo fell just short of *Colossus*, and *Marlborough*, the flagship of our Vice-Admiral, opened fire. *Colossus* fired three salvos at the enemy battle fleet, and four salvos at a disabled four-funnelled enemy cruiser which gradually drew abeam from ahead, and was last seen obviously sinking, masts and funnels gone, and blazing merrily. Just after this interlude we passed close by the destroyer, *Acasta*, lying completely disabled; one of our Torpedo Gunners had lately joined her, and he and his party aft gave us a rousing cheer as we passed.

About 7 p.m. a three-funnelled enemy light cruiser passed on opposite courses to us at a range of 9,700 yards. We gave her three salvos, and left her crippled and apparently sinking. It was just about then that we passed the wreck of *Invincible*, both ends sticking out of the water. We mistook her for a German, being unable to read her name. Meanwhile a solitary destroyer appeared making an attack on our starboard bow,

<sup>1</sup> Probably the *Galatea's* Squadron, *vide* her narrative of the "Windy Corner" period, page 81.

and at her we fired both 12-inch and 4-inch, and she was stopped at a range of about 6,000 yards. I believe our foremost turret claimed a direct hit though we were by no means the only ship firing at her. I do not think she was able to fire her torpedoes.

At 7.12 p.m. an enemy battle cruiser of the *Lutzow* class suddenly appeared on our starboard beam emerging out of the mist or a smoke screen, and was followed by two other battle cruisers and I think four battle-ships of the *König* class. At first I thought she was steaming on an opposite course to us although she was only 10,000 yards distant, but she was really on an almost parallel course. *Colossus* and *Collingwood* concentrated on this leading ship which later was identified as *Lutzow*, and we fired five salvos at her, the final range being 8,400 yards, and bearing, I think, Green 105. Our fourth and fifth salvos hit well and the *Collingwood* also hit her. She then burst into flames, listed, and turned directly away from us. Just before she finally disappeared, a light cruiser was observed to approach her and appeared to be blotted out by a heavy salvo of what looked like 15-inch shell, though it was impossible to see what actually happened as she was almost out of sight, and the other ships with her also disappeared either in a smoke screen or in the mist.

During this action *Colossus* was being heavily shelled, apparently by the German battle fleet on the starboard bow although they were invisible to us except for the flash of their guns, but, as far as I know, the return fire of the battle cruisers we were engaging, *Lutzow* and her squadron, came nowhere near us. We were repeatedly straddled across the fo'csle, and a good many splinter holes were made forward from numerous "shorts" which burst on hitting the water. One salvo hit us direct at 7.16 p.m., two high-explosive shells of approximately 12-inch calibre landing in the after-end of the fore-superstructure, and a third ricocheted on to the armoured pad abreast "Q" turret, about 3 feet above the water-line after hitting the water a few feet short. I think only one shell exploded in the superstructure, but this caused a lot of minor damage and fired ten boxes of ready-use cordite at the port 4-inch guns, but fortunately these guns were not manned being on the disengaged side, and so there were not many casualties. This shell entered just abaft No. 5 starboard 4-inch gun which was in action, knocked over the marine gun's crew and slightly wounded three of them. Two of the Admiral's domestics, who were by the Admiral's sea cabin at the fore end of the port 4-inch battery (instead of at their proper stations down below), were also slightly wounded by minute splinters that were almost like dust shot.

Another heavy shell from a salvo a few seconds later burst some 30 yards short abreast the fore-bridge, and flying fragments did quite a lot of damage. All the officers and men on the fore-bridge had very narrow escapes, but only Leading-Seaman Beddow, the range-taker at the fore-bridge range-finder, was hit, his right arm being practically severed just below the shoulder. He later had to have his arm amputated at the shoulder,





GERMAN BATTLE CRUISER "SEYDLITZ" ON FIRE.



but had it not been for the Captain of Marines who improvised a tourniquet out of a handkerchief and a bit of stick, and so stopped the flow of blood, he would certainly have bled to death.

No. 1 starboard searchlight was completely wrecked, the chart and signal houses were damaged, and two men in the fore-top were wounded; also a midshipman in the fore-top had a small splinter from this shell right through his cap, but it merely grazed his scalp. The fire caused by the shell-burst and by ignited cordite was easily got under, and by the time I got out of the conning tower (having been ordered to see the fire put out and report damage) there were only a few odds and ends, such as canvas gun-covers, etc., still smouldering. None of the 4-inch guns were put out of action, but the periscope glasses of "P" turret were smashed and several of the boom-boats were badly knocked about.

. . . . .

It was while we were engaged with *Lutzow* that a second torpedo attack was made on us, this time by four enemy torpedo craft. Our 4-inch guns were put on to them, and "A" turret also shifted target on to them for a round or two just before they turned away, at a range of 6,000 or 7,000 yards. They fired their torpedoes, but I do not think any of the four boats got back again as they were under a tremendous fire from a large number of our battleships, and they disappeared, presumably sunk. The tracks of five torpedoes were observed from us, and we had to alter course to port to avoid two of them, after which *Colossus* did not again come into action although we could see various actions being fought astern of us throughout the night, and a Zeppelin was sighted shortly after 3.30 a.m. next morning.

Various ships that had been near us during the day action reported that *Colossus* passed through a cloud of fire, spray, and smoke, and they quite thought that we were done for. I attribute our comparative immunity to the fact that we were gradually reducing speed all the time we were under fire, in order to correct our distance from the rear ship of the 4th B.S. ahead of us, consequently nearly all of the salvoes fell across our stem. The German shooting was good, and their salvoes had a very small spread, but it was curious that the return fire of the ships with which we were actually engaged apparently all went considerably over us, it being the salvoes from ships out of sight of us that straddled and hit us. The actual damage we sustained was unimportant, and fortunately our sea-going and fighting efficiency was unimpaired. The superstructure was badly wrecked in the neighbourhood of the shell burst, also several cabins, and numerous splinter holes in the starboard side forward required plugging, but that was about all.

I was chiefly impressed by the fact that so large a number of heavy shells could fall so close to us without actually hitting, and to the sort of kaleidoscopic effect produced on one's mind by so many incidents occurring in so short a space of time. Our own shooting was good, and no failures of any sort occurred; there was less "flap" than during an



ordinary firing practice. The control officers aloft mistook the shell which hit us for "P" turret firing without orders, and only realised that we had been hit when they saw the flames from the burning cordite.

## Chronological Table of Events.

H.M.S. "Colossus"—31st May to 1st June, 1916.

3.00 p.m.	Signal "B.J."—(action stations).
5.40 „	Weather conditions:—Visibility 6 miles, sky overcast, sea calm, wind S.W. light.
	Heard heavy firing 4 points on starboard bow.
5.50 „	Our battle cruisers in sight on starboard bow firing.
5.51 „	Enemy battle fleet in sight on starboard bow.
5.57 „	Enemy battle fleet alter course to north.
6.02 „	Enemy battle fleet in sight.
6.06 „	<i>Lion</i> steam (? smoke) coming from abreast fore turret, port side.
6.10 „	5th B.S. in action.
6.13 „	Large yellow projectile with black band ricocheted over.
6.16 „	1st Cruiser Squadron on starboard quarter heavily engaged.
	One ship blows up.
6.18 „	Salvo 200 yards short and left of <i>Colossus</i> .
6.19 „	<i>Marlborough</i> opened fire.
6.21 „	Heavy shell passed over.
6.22 „	Enemy cruiser on starboard beam disabled.
	Enemy battle fleet on starboard quarter, 12,000 yards.
6.30 „	<i>Colossus</i> fired three salvos at enemy battle fleet.
6.32 „	<i>Colossus</i> fired four salvos at enemy disabled cruiser mentioned above.
6.45 „	Ceased firing, nothing in sight.
6.48 „	Passed <i>Acasta</i> disabled.
6.50 „	Our course south.
7.00 „	<i>Colossus</i> fired three salvos at three-funnelled enemy cruiser on opposite course, range 9,700 yards.
7.02 „	Passed wreck of <i>Invincible</i> on port beam, broken in two.
7.03 „	<i>Benbow</i> opened fire with 6-inch guns on enemy destroyer.
7.05 „	<i>Colossus</i> opened with 12-inch and 4-inch at destroyer, attacking on starboard bow. Hit and stopped her.
7.12 „	Suddenly observed <i>Lutzow</i> class battle cruiser 10,000 yards on starboard beam, accompanied by two other large ships. Opened fire at 9,000 yards, closing at 7.16 p.m. to 8,400 yards.

- 7.15 p.m. Fired five salvoes at *Lutzow*, observed at least four direct hits (4th and 5th salvoes), two on the water-line. Enemy burst into flames, listed, and disappeared in the flame, mist, and smoke.  
*Marlborough*, *Benbow*, *Neptune*, *Collingwood* all reported that *Colossus* passed through a cloud of fire, spray, and smoke, and they thought we were done for.
- 7.16 „ *Colossus* hit in superstructure just abaft foremost funnel by 12-inch shell, which exploded and caused fires on both port 4-inch gun decks and signal deck. Cordite chief cause of fire, which was extinguished in a few minutes. Another 12-inch, which did not explode, hit just abaft the first. Both shells only just missed the main strut of the mast.
- 7.17 „ Heavy shell burst 30 yards short of ship in line with the fore-bridge. Splinters penetrated foremost funnel and all cabins forward. Wrecked S. 1 searchlight. Beddow, Leading Seaman range-taker on fore-bridge, arm practically shot off; two men wounded in fore-top; also three marines at S. 5 4-inch gun, and two domestics in Admiral's quarters.
- 7.25 „ Ceased fire.
- 7.35 „ Turned to port to avoid torpedo.
- 8.00 „ Divisions line ahead, course west. Speed, 14 knots.
- 8.15 „ Firing taking place right ahead.
- 8.55 „ Our light cruisers engage enemy destroyers on starboard beam. *Benbow* also fired.
- 9.05 „ Firing still heard, hands to night defence stations.
- 10.10 „ Firing on starboard beam lasting 4 minutes.  
 Position, lat.  $56^{\circ} 26'$  N., long.  $5^{\circ} 57'$  E. Course S. Speed, 17 knots.
- 10.35 „ Observed destroyer action lasting about 10 minutes. One destroyer on fire.
- 11.40 „ Rapid and continuous firing for 15 minutes right astern.
- 1st June.
- 2.15 a.m. Day action stations. Visibility 2 miles. Misty, calm.
- 2.30 „ Course north.
- 3.17 „ Heavy firing on port quarter.
- 3.43 „ Zeppelin in sight, several ships fired.  
 "Zep." flew off.
- 8.18 „ Passed lot of wreckage and bit of lifebuoy with "EN" on it.
- 9.30 „ Submarines reported.
- 10.30 „ "B.J. 1" stations (i.e., action stations, falling out for meals in reliefs).

## Narrative from H.M.S. "Castor."

*This light cruiser, the ship of Commodore J. R. P. Hawksley, Commanding Destroyer Flotillas of the Grand Fleet, was stationed after deployment near to "King George V.," Vice-Admiral Jerram's flagship which led the battle line. "Castor's" narrative shows what difficulties the van of our battle fleet had in keeping touch with the enemy's battle line, and how little of the action was seen by the ships in our van.*

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We were screening the battle fleet on the bow of *King George V.* when we first heard that the battle cruiser force was in action, steaming to the southward. We later heard that they had turned 16 points, and that we should soon be in touch with them and with the enemy.

About 6.0 p.m. we sighted *Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Tiger*, and *New Zealand* in action steaming on a converging course to us, so that eventually we got to within about 4,000 yards of *Lion*, but the only view we had of the Huns at this time was just the flashes of their guns. I noticed about this time a shell, that presumably was fired at our battle cruisers but was about 4,000 yards over, land on board one of the 1st Flotilla Destroyers, and she circled round with steam pouring out of her everywhere. (Probably H.M.S. *Defender*.) Also the *Chester* came close across our bows from east to west with four big holes in her along her main deck, and her ship's company cheering through the holes as she passed us.

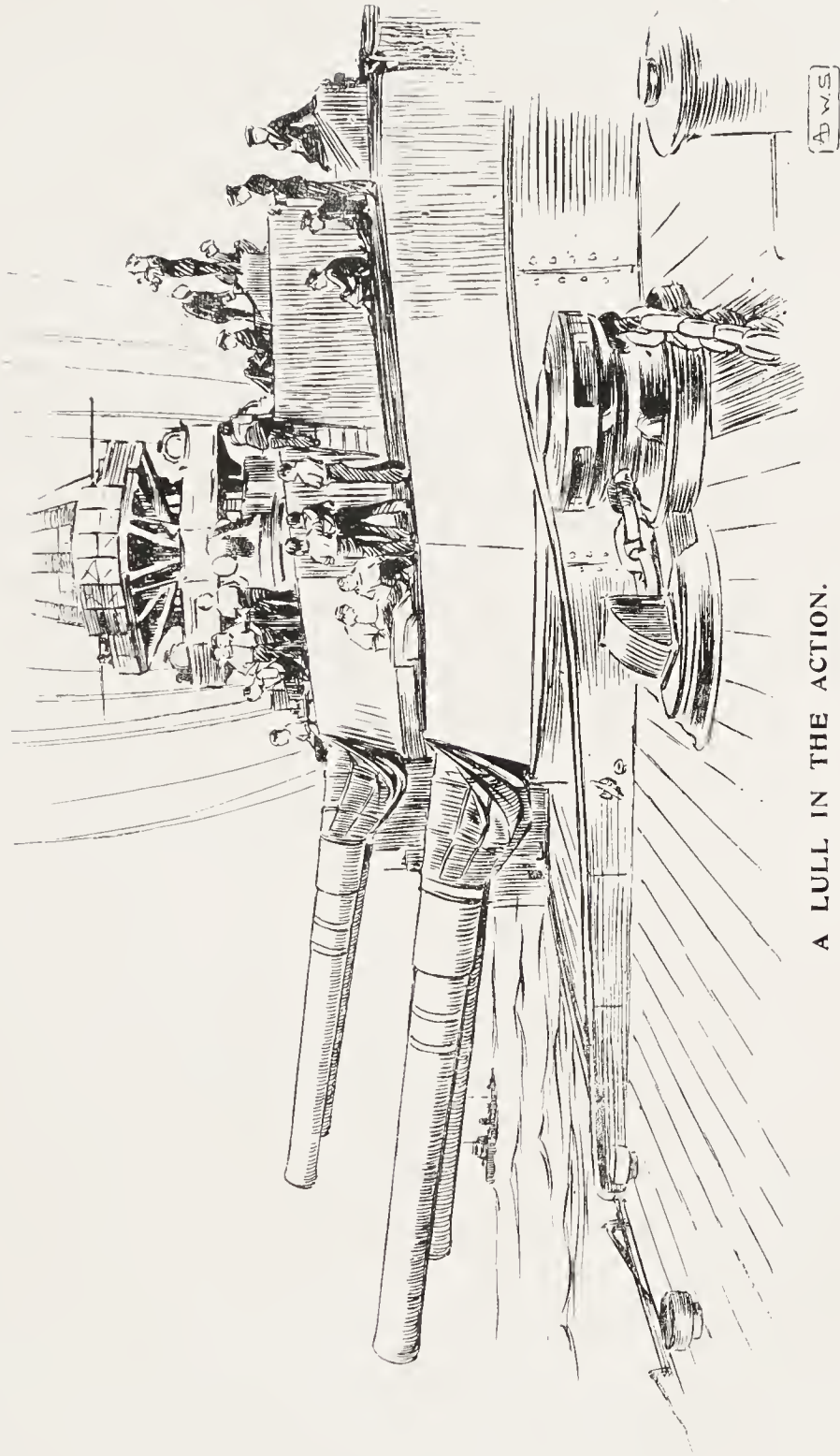
We saw *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, and *Indomitable* come into action ahead of the *Lion*, and soon afterwards, with practically the first salvo fired at her, *Invincible* blew up.

The *Lion* and battle cruisers were going full speed I should think, and we were now on their disengaged side, dropping astern of them so that the battle fleet could get into touch with the enemy by forming astern of the battle cruisers. As the two remaining *Invincible* class battle cruisers were also dropping astern in order to prolong the battle cruiser line to the rear instead of remaining ahead of *Lion*, there was a considerable congestion of ships—light cruisers and destroyers—abreast the leading battle squadron.<sup>1</sup> However, we eventually got out clear on the engaged bow of the *King George V.* and close on the quarter of the last battle cruiser, the van battle squadron now being close in rear of the battle cruisers.

We then saw a somewhat disjointed-looking German flotilla apparently making a torpedo attack. We went out to drive them off, but only got within range of one straggler. Our Captain then wanted to go on and

<sup>1</sup> Note that this congestion of ships was at the *head* of the battle line. There was a similar congestion at the rear of the line at "Windy Corner," when the battle cruisers passed the wing of the battle fleet, to which reference has been made in previous narratives.





A LULL IN THE ACTION.



deliver a torpedo attack, though the German line was certainly not an ideal torpedo target as it was very much straggled out, but as soon as we formed for attack we were recalled by the C.-in-C. As it happened, that was the only chance we had of making a daylight attack. Not very long after this the enemy became entirely hidden by smoke, and the battle fleet ceased firing, but the enemy reappeared some time later and we could see some of the *Kaiser*, *Konig*, and *Heligoland* class battleships quite plainly from our advanced position; but as soon as our 2nd Battle Squadron opened fire, the smoke again obscured them.

I took this opportunity to go down and look for some food, and as soon as I got up again I saw a German flotilla apparently making a torpedo attack, so we went off to repel them. We then came in sight of the enemy heavy ships again, four battleships of the *Nassau* pre-Dreadnought class, which were firing in a desultory sort of way apparently at nothing. The 4th Light Cruiser Squadron was also close ahead of us, and as we approached the enemy fired a few salvos at *Calliope*, but this was the last we saw of the day action as it was now getting dark, and observing that *King George V.* had altered course away from us, we deemed it necessary to follow her so as not to lose touch.





## Chapter VIII.



### THE GERMAN DESTROYER ATTACKS.



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## CHAPTER VIII.

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### The German Destroyer Attacks.

Which were launched against the British Battle Fleet at about 7.10 and 7.25 p.m.

*Extract from Commander-in-Chief's despatch :—*

“ About 7.10 p.m. a flotilla of enemy destroyers supported by a cruiser was seen approaching *Iron Duke* bearing  $60^{\circ}$  from ahead the starboard side. The fleet was turned away two points by the ‘Preparative,’<sup>1</sup> and subsequently another two points, fire being opened on the flotilla with 6-inch and turret guns at a range of about 10,000 to 8,000 yards. When at 8,000 yards the destroyers fired their torpedoes, turning towards the rear of their line, and disappearing in a smoke screen. No torpedoes hit. One destroyer was observed to sink.

“ About 7.25 another enemy destroyer attack was observed approaching the rear of the battle line from a bearing  $120^{\circ}$  from ahead, 9,000 yards on *Iron Duke's* starboard side. They were heavily engaged by the four rear divisions of the battle fleet and 5th B.S. The 11th Flotilla and 4th L.C.S. had advanced to counter the former destroyer attack, and were in a favourable position to counter the second attack, during which, at 7.22 p.m., they sank an enemy destroyer. They were recalled at 7.40. In addition, this third destroyer from the left was observed to sink, and the left-hand one to be struck and turn bottom up, approximately at 7.35. At 7.45 p.m. a division of the 12th Flotilla, consisting of *Obedient*, *Mindful*, *Marvel*, and *Onslaught*, proceeded to attack and sink an enemy ‘V’ class destroyer flying a Commodore's pendant near the rear of the 5th B.S.”

*From the leading battleship to the rear battleship, the Grand Fleet battle line was more than 7 miles long. A couple of miles or more ahead of the leading ship was the Battle Cruiser Force, itself over a mile long, and the rear of the Battle Fleet was prolonged another 1 or 2 miles astern by the light cruisers and the destroyer flotillas following the 5th Battle Squadron. The whole length of the British Fleet therefore was not less than 11 or 12 miles, and perhaps was nearly 15 miles.*

*Debouching from the head of the German Fleet, the enemy destroyer flotillas came first into sight of the van of the Grand Fleet, and then of the centre, and then of the rear, as the low range of visibility opened their changing position to first this and then that part of the long battle line.*

<sup>1</sup> A flag signal ; 2 points equals  $22\frac{1}{2}$  degrees—i.e., quarter of a right angle.

## Chap. VIII.—The German Destroyer Attacks.

*From narratives of different ships a kind of moving picture—almost a cinematograph one might say—can be refashioned of the path of the German attacking flotillas, as at 7.10 p.m. and again at 7.25 p.m. an attack was launched, was developed, was sighted by the British Fleet, was opposed by British gunfire, fired torpedoes, and then turned back to regain the German battle line. For the next 6 or 7 minutes perhaps the German torpedoes ran their course towards the British line, then were sighted by look-outs and hastily reported to the Captains of ships, who by use of helm turned their ships to avoid them.*

*From the narratives of eyewitnesses one can piece together the acts of this play, the opening scene of which is described by an officer of H.M.S. "Conqueror," one of the battleships near the head of our line.*

*Description from H.M.S. "Conqueror" 7th ship in the battle line :—*

"At 7.14 observed enemy destroyers attacking, and fired on them for eight minutes. They were making a very heavy smoke screen, and were never on the same course for more than about a minute at a time, turning, twisting, wriggling, and disappearing into their own smoke, only to reappear again almost immediately at a different place. We now turned 4 points away from the enemy. This attack being repelled, we trained on to what I took to be a ship of the *Derfflinger* class, but before we could open fire she turned away and disappeared in the mist; just afterwards, for about half a minute, I saw another large ship very badly battered, on fire in several places, and unrecognisable. . . .

"At 7.26 we again opened fire on attacking German destroyers which employed the same tactics of turning away as we fired and turning back again as soon as the salvo landed, the result for us being rather like trying to hit snipe with buckshot.

"But our last salvo landed in the smoke made by one particular boat, and in the midst of the splash and smoke there appeared to be débris, and when the smoke cleared away we saw an overturned destroyer where the target had been. My turret trainer swore he had seen our shot all the way until it hit her, in which he divided honours with the trainer of 'B' turret, who swore the same thing. We ceased fire at 7.32."

*The second of these two German destroyer attacks commenced at about 7.25 p.m. and was observed and opposed by the battle cruisers ahead of the battle fleet, as well as by the battle fleet themselves. The following description of the start of the second attack is from the narrative of H.M.S. "Indomitable," at this time the rear ship but one of the battle cruiser force, a mile or so ahead and on the engaged side of the leading battleship.*

*Description from H.M.S. "Indomitable" :—*

"At 7.20 p.m. we re-opened fire at the enemy battle cruisers at a range of 14,000 yards, our squadron apparently making splendid practice. . . . One big ship turned out of the line to starboard, her after part





BRITISH DESTROYER MAKING A SMOKE SCREEN.



BRITISH DESTROYER MAKING A SMOKE SCREEN.

[To face page 112.]



enveloped in flame, and began slowly to drop astern. The remainder emitted dense volumes of smoke, which hung above the water like a pall, through which at 7.25 p.m. we could see about a dozen destroyers racing towards our line. Orders came through for the 4-inch guns' crews to close up, and, as the first bearing was passed and the turret swung round, I could hear the staccato bark of these small guns joining in the general din. As the destroyers cleared the smoke screen, white pillars began to leap up amongst them, like giant nine-pins, to be knocked down and spring up again without ceasing as the big guns came into action. Almost half the distance had been covered by the attackers, when I saw two of these white towers of water rise simultaneously in front of the left-hand boat of the line, and as they sank no thrusting bow came through the spray, only a thinning streak of smoke. . . . .

"This attack was delivered abaft our beam, so that we obviously were not its target, but we could not see what result had been obtained, although afterwards we heard that it had been abortive."

#### 7.45 p.m.—12th Destroyer Flotilla Attack and Sink a German Destroyer.

*As a result of the gunfire concentrated against them one destroyer of the German attacking flotilla, in addition to the two or perhaps three others that had been sunk instantaneously in the course of the attack, was badly hit and lay stopped between the lines, drifting down not under control close past the rear of the British Battle Fleet, whilst her consorts, unable to help her, returned to the German line and the big ships on both sides continued the main action over her head.*

*Four destroyers of our 12th Flotilla, which was stationed to screen the rear Battle Squadron, moved out to "finish off" this boat. In the words of the Commander-in-Chief's despatch:—"At 7.45 a division of the 12th Flotilla, consisting of 'Obedient,' 'Mindful,' 'Marvel,' and 'Onslaught,' proceeded to attack and sink an enemy 'V' class destroyer flying a Commodore's pendant, near the rear of the 5th B.S." The following brief extracts from narratives describe the details of this little incident. The German destroyer appears to have fought to the last with gallantry:—*

*Description from H.M.S. "Faulknor":—*

*"The next incident [after "Windy Corner"] from the Faulknor's point of view was, as far as I can remember, at about 7.35 p.m., when a German destroyer was sighted passing between the two battle lines badly damaged, but with her after-gun still firing. So the 1st division of our flotilla, led by the Obedient, was despatched to starboard*



to complete her destruction, and moved off to the southward at high speed, until a few minutes later we saw them open fire on the German destroyer. A few well-directed salvoes were sufficient, and *Obedient* rejoined the flotilla after about 15 minutes, reporting that the German destroyer had been sunk. The writer was told after the action that this German destroyer continued to fire her after-gun until the last moment before she sank."

*Description from H.M.S. "Obedient," leading the 1st Division of the 12th Flotilla :—*

"Up to now we had seen no enemy ship, only flashes from their guns, but at 6.30 p.m. we passed a big German ship, floating through between the lines apparently derelict. Just after the mist lifted for a minute or two to show up a few German ships, one of which was clearly seen for a time and received a fearful hammering from the battle ships at the rear of our line, but then the mist covered her again.

"Nothing more was to be seen for nearly an hour, though the battleships at the rear of the line occasionally fired a few salvoes. About 7.35 p.m. an enemy destroyer appeared ahead, apparently broken down, at any rate only steaming very slowly. The *Obedient* asked permission to attack, and the first division, *Obedient*, *Marvel*, *Mindful*, and *Onslaught*, were ordered to close and destroy her, which they did. She opened fire from her fore-castle gun at us, but did not score a hit, and early on a salvo from one of us carried away this gun, the bridge and the foremast, whilst within a minute or so another salvo from *Mindful* holed her along the water line abreast her foremost funnel. Very shortly afterwards she turned slowly over on her port side and sank. Her number we were unable to see owing to it having been shot away, but the distinguishing letter was 'V,' and she flew a Commodore's pendant. *Obedient* rejoined the flotilla and reported that the enemy had been sunk."

### Dodging German Torpedoes.

*Meanwhile some of the German torpedoes fired from the attacking destroyers or from light cruisers between the lines, or from the German heavy ships, had reached the British battle line, and various of our battleships, sighting the tracks, were forced to haul out of the line in order to dodge the torpedoes.*

*Quite a number of battleships were forced to this action about 7.30 p.m. as a result of the destroyer attacks of 7.10 and 7.25 p.m., but also earlier in the action other battleships near the rear had had to alter course to avoid torpedo tracks. The following two narratives, of H.M.S. "Agincourt" and of H.M.S. "Neptune," give typical descriptions of "torpedo dodging," and, together with the narrative of H.M.S. "Marlborough" later in the chapter, show the considerable anxiety which the German attacks caused.*

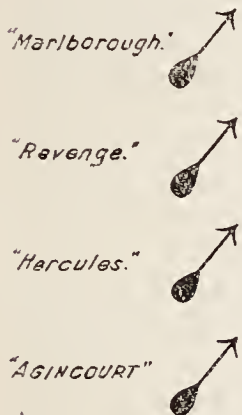
Narrative of H.M.S. "Agincourt."

" . . . The pleasure it was to see H.M.S. 'Agincourt' . . . as she poured out salvoes from her broadside of fourteen 12-inch guns."

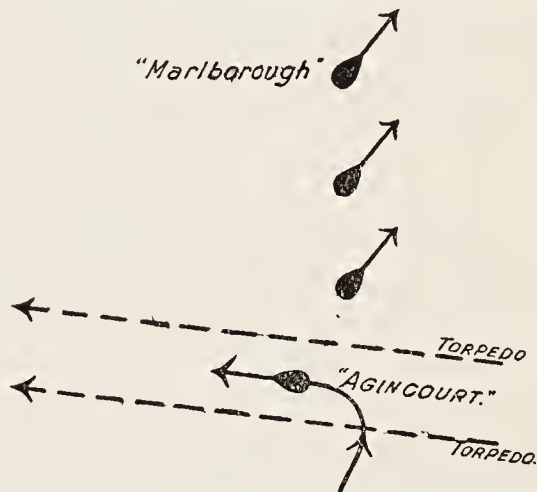
*Narrative of Midshipman of H.M.S. "Malaya."*

"The deployment at about 6.15 placed *Agincourt* tail ship of the battle line, rather out of the action eventually, but in the meantime during the deployment we had all the fun our end. Shots had already pitched about our division, when at 6.17 *Marlborough* opened fire, and although *Agincourt's* firing was delayed until 6.23 by our own destroyers being between us and the enemy, we then opened fire at 10,000 yards at an enemy battle cruiser. She could only just be made out, but hits were obtained on her before the mist obscured the view.

T. 3.5. TORPEDO TRACKS OBSERVED.



"AGINCOURT" Alters course Torpedo tracks pass one each side of her.



"However, after this it was a regular game of 'hide and seek,' the enemy at times being enveloped in the mist and smoke, appearing out of it for only short intervals like rabbits running from one hole to another in a burrow, so that up to 7.50, when we eventually ceased fire, we had only four short periods of actual engagement with the enemy. It was difficult to estimate the effect of our firing, although we could tell that the third of these periods was a highly successful one in the matter of registering hits on a battleship of the *Kaiser* class. Our fourth period was at 7.25, using our secondary armament, 6-inch guns, against a destroyer attack observed to be debouching from the head of the enemy's battle fleet, and incidentally 'smoke-screening' the latter very effectively. Our first few salvoes put the leading boat out of action, and we were proceeding to do the same to the second boat when the thick weather brought everything to a close. The enemy big ships evidently turned away behind this smoke screen, for they were not sighted again.



## Chap. VIII.—The German Destroyer Attacks.

“At 6.54 p.m. *Marlborough* had been hit by a torpedo, but she continued the action to all appearances undamaged except for a slight list to starboard. Soon after this the division had a busy time dodging torpedoes, fired apparently from enemy destroyers, or possibly from the battleships themselves. Luckily the tracks could be spotted from the tops in time. As far as *Agincourt* was concerned, our excitement started at 7.8, when with a sharp turn of the ship a torpedo passed just under our stern, and later on another broke surface about 150 yards short on our starboard beam. At 7.35 the tracks of two more torpedoes were reported approaching on the starboard side, but by good co-operation between the fore-top and the conning tower they were both avoided. Aloft the tracks were clearly visible, and acting on the reports from there the ship was gradually turned away, so that by perfect timing one torpedo passed up the port side and one the starboard side; after which we resumed our place in the line.

“A fifth torpedo was successfully dodged by zigzagging at 7.47, but after this we had no further excitements.

“We ourselves had no opportunity to fire torpedoes at the enemy, but fired 144 shells from our 12-inch turrets and from our secondary armament (6-inch guns) 111 shells.”

### Extract from the Narrative of H.M.S. “*Neptune*.”<sup>1</sup>

“German destroyers were now observed ahead of the German battle cruiser, *Lutzow*, and soon afterwards they turned towards us to attack. Our secondary armament opened fire and scored a hit or two, but their attack was successfully made, and a number of torpedoes were fired, which gave us a few anxious minutes. We observed a great number of tracks of torpedoes, some as far away as  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles. One torpedo crossed the line immediately under *Neptune*'s stern, and directly afterwards another track was spotted which seemed to be coming straight for us. But apparently the officers on the bridge below had not seen it, and were in blissful ignorance of the danger that the ship was in. There was no time to explain, and a stentorian ‘hard-a-starboard’ shouted down the voice pipe by the Gunnery Lieutenant was fortunately accepted without question and put on by the helmsman. The bridge then sighted the torpedo, and emergency full speed was ordered. We began to turn rapidly, but I vividly remember how the torpedo got closer and closer. From the fore-top we were craning our necks over the metal side, while the whole top was groaning and vibrating under the strain of the ship turning at full speed with full helm on. We looked down on the tops of the turrets and the decks below, and could see our shipmates working down there quite unconscious of the immediate peril. I personally had been torpedoed once before—

<sup>1</sup> By a Midshipman stationed aloft. See also pages 98-102.



in the *Formidable*—and had no delusions about the situation. The ship had turned a right angle, 8 points, and the torpedo was now dead astern following exactly in our course, but going faster than our fastest speed, and coming closer and closer, until our view in the fore-top was blanketed by the mainmast and after platforms. We could do nothing, of course, but wait and wait, mouths open, like when one is expecting a gun to fire. Nothing happened. The time passed when it should have reached our stern and there should have been a big explosion, but still nothing happened. An enemy salvo splashed down close on our starboard bow, but nobody heeded it. Then somebody laughed, and breaking the spell, we knew that after all it was somehow all right. The miracle, for it really seemed miraculous, was accounted for in *Neptune's* report: 'Torpedo was either deflected by the wash from *Neptune's* propellers or ran its range out. The latter is more likely.'

"About this time several other battleships besides the *Neptune* were hauling out of the line dodging torpedoes, with the result that the line became considerably lengthened, and was irregular in places where ships were trying to regain their station. We had dropped astern, and for some seven minutes the *St. Vincent* was directly between us and the enemy and we were unable to fire. Just after we had successfully dodged the torpedo, we heard, or more exactly perhaps felt, a dull concussion, and saw the *Marlborough* haul out of the line to port listing heavily. She had been hit by a torpedo, but a few minutes later she regained her position in the line with now only a slight list, and we saw her firing again strongly."

#### German Torpedo Hit on H.M.S. "Marlborough."

*But despite the heavy gunfire concentrated against them, and in spite of the losses suffered from this gunfire, the majority of the destroyers of the German flotilla, both in the attack at about 7.10 p.m. and again in the attack at about 7.25 p.m., appear to have reached their objective (a position suitable for firing their torpedoes at the British battle line), and to have discharged a number of torpedoes. Some of these torpedoes were prevented from reaching our line by the alteration of course away from the enemy ordered by the Commander-in-Chief, and the other torpedoes were all dodged by our ships, so that no torpedo fired by the German flotilla at this time scored a hit.*

*Only one torpedo hit was scored on a British battleship during the whole course of the battle, and that was one from a torpedo which, running unobserved, hit H.M.S. "Marlborough," the flagship of Vice-Admiral Burney Commanding the Rear Battle Squadron, at about 6.54 p.m.—i.e., before either the 7.10 or 7.25 attacks by the German destroyer flotilla were commenced. Presumably therefore, this one effective torpedo was fired by some ship in or with the German battle line in the first half hour of the battle fleet action, or possibly by one of the detached German light cruisers that had been sighted near the British line soon after the deployment.*

*H.M.S. "Marlborough," a modern super-Dreadnought of the "Iron Duke" class, in spite of her torpedo hit which later was found to have made a hole in her side 70 feet long, maintained her position in the battle line throughout the day action, and until 3 a.m. the following morning, June 1st. It will be noticed that on two occasions after she had been hit, still during the battle fleet action, she sighted torpedo tracks approaching her, but was able to manœuvre so as to avoid them. She had dodged one torpedo just before she was hit—she did not see the track of the one that hit her and at the time thought she had been hit by a mine—and she dodged six more torpedoes afterwards. She reached the shelter of the Humber under her own steam on June 2nd. The following narrative describes her experiences during the action, including the early and late stages of the battle fleet action as well as the particular moments of the torpedo hit, and is written by an officer stationed aloft, the best position in the ship perhaps from which to observe torpedo tracks.*

---

### Events Noted from the Fore-top of H.M.S. "Marlborough."

(Leading Ship of the Starboard Wing Column of the Battle Fleet before Deployment ; nearest Battle Ship to the Enemy at the moment of Deployment, and 21st Ship in the Line, i.e., 4th from the Rear, after Deployment.)

Before 5.45 p.m., at which time four of our battle cruisers led by *Lion* came into sight on our starboard bow in action with an unseen enemy, we had been receiving signals which gradually increased in interest and excitement from the first report of enemy light forces being sighted by one of our cruisers, until the visual signal received from *Lion* of the German battle fleet being almost within gun range of our battle fleet. I kept a record of some of the most interesting signals, of which perhaps this selection will show how our interest was gradually worked up as one after the other they were received :—

- 2.20 p.m. Galatea to C.-in-C. and S.O., B.C.F.,<sup>1</sup> "Enemy cruiser bearing east-south-east."
- 2.30 „ Galatea to C.-in-C. and S.O., B.C.F., "Pursuing destroyers or cruisers."
- 3.2 „ C.-in-C. to Ships in company, "Assume readiness for action. Increase speed to 18 knots. Raise steam for full speed."
- 3.55 „ S.O., B.C.F., to C.-in-C., "Enemy going south. Engaging enemy. Five battle cruisers in sight."
- 4.00 „ S.O., 2nd L.C.S., to C.-in-C., "Enemy's battle fleet in sight steering north."
- 4.04 „ C.-in-C. to S.O., 3rd B.C.S. (*Hood's* Squadron), "Proceed at once to reinforce battle cruiser fleet."

<sup>1</sup> Senior Officer, Battle Cruiser Force.



## Narrative of H.M.S. "Marlborough."

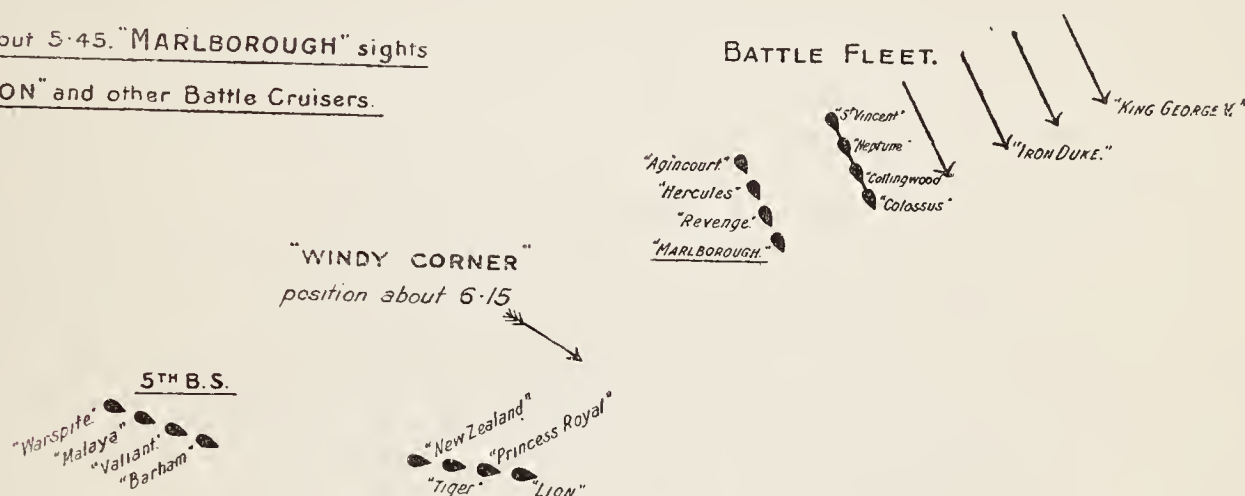
4.33 p.m. S.O., 5th Battle Squadron, to C.-in-C., "Engaging enemy."  
 4.54 „ C.-in-C. to Admiralty, "Consider fleet action imminent."  
 5.8 „ S.O., B.C.F., to C.-in-C., "Enemy battle fleet bearing south-east."  
 5.57 „ S.O., B.C.F., to C.-in-C., "Enemy battle fleet steering north."  
 And finally at 6.15 p.m. we received this signal:—

C.-in-C.—General (to ships in company), "Enemy in sight bearing S.S.E. Form line of battle S.E. by S."

You can very well imagine the increasing excitement which the receipt of these signals produced, and long before any enemy were in sight we were all closed up at our action stations in absolute "readiness for action."

About 5.45. "MARLBOROUGH" sights

"LION" and other Battle Cruisers.



At 5.45 we sighted our battle cruisers on our starboard bow, and could see that they were engaging with their starboard guns an enemy that was out of sight of us. They continued on their course across our "front," and passed away to the (ultimate) head of the battle line.

At 6.8 p.m. we started taking ranges, and at 6.15 picked up as target an enemy battleship of the *Kaiser* class, and on her we opened fire at 6.17. She was making a good deal of smoke, but her inclination was pretty easy to determine by the trend of the smoke from the funnels and by the general look of the ship. After some alterations of range to the guns, at about 6.19 we began to hit, and when "splash" for the fifth salvo was reported I saw four explosions with a red flame.

We fired seven salvos at this battleship, and the fifth and last were clearly seen to hit, the fifth with a deep red flame and the last with a large cloud of greyish-coloured smoke. Our shoot was then (6.21) interrupted by a cruiser which crossed the range coming from our port side, steering practically at right angles across the line of fire, and she hid our battleship target by the smoke that was pouring from her aft, where she was badly on fire.

At 6.24 we gave her to the guns as the target: "Green 98, cruiser, 3 funnels," with a range of 10,500 yards, and fired five salvos at her, but



hits were not plainly distinguishable, as two or three other of our ships were also firing at her. At 6.25 our 6-inch guns joined in on this same target, but only until 6.29, when we had to cease firing for ten minutes whilst the ship was altering course, all the enemy being hidden by smoke.

Our original battleship target had appeared to turn away 8 points to starboard when the cruiser came across the range, and then became obscured, but at 6.39 we saw for a moment another—or the same?—*Kaiser* class battleship and fired one salvo at her at a range of 13,000 yards. But then she altered away to starboard and was lost. Meanwhile the cruiser which had turned towards us whilst we were engaging her lay stopped in sight of us, heavily on fire, and not replying with her guns. From 6.40 to 6.45 we had a five minutes' pause, when we could find no target for our guns—an exasperating time when one was longing to get on with the job, but could simply do nothing except curse the bad visibility and our distance from the enemy.

At 6.54 we were hit by a torpedo. We thought at the time it might have been a mine, for we saw no track of a torpedo whatsoever, but we know now for certain that it was a torpedo as bits of one were found later in the ship. It hit on the starboard side, and aloft the top swayed a lot and finally took up a list to starboard, so that I imagined one strut of the tripod mast had been shot away; but looking over the side of the top I saw that it was the whole ship that had taken a list to starboard. The shock caused some of the switches on the electrical switchboard to jump, and one of the gunnery control instruments got out of step; also some fuses of the telephone circuits went, but they were very quickly replaced.

**The German  
Torpedo  
Attack.**

A few minutes after we were hit we passed a destroyer, the *Acasta*, close on our port hand, flying 6 flag—"Am in danger of sinking"—and the "Not under control" signal; she had a collision mat stretched out over her starboard quarter. I was afraid for a moment that we were going to collide with her, as we passed so close to her that from aloft she was almost hidden by our ram, and we seemed to be practically on top of her. But she came by all clear, and her men cheered as we passed.

At about 7 o'clock, when we were just getting "square" again after the torpedo explosion, three tracks of torpedoes were seen approaching on the starboard side, all three apparently going to cross our track. The bridge were informed, and the ship was turned to port to avoid them, so that two passed ahead and one astern of us. Five or ten minutes before this some German destroyers had appeared on our starboard bow, so presumably these torpedoes, as well as the one that had hit us, came from them.

Directly after we had dodged these three torpedoes a four-funnelled cruiser of apparently the *Roon* class came into sight on our starboard beam, range 9,800 yards, bearing exactly on the beam, Green 90. She was stopped and already badly damaged, but we opened fire on her and fired

four salvoes. The third and fourth salvoes hit her, opened up her sides, and revealed a deep red flame inside her hull. This was at 7.3, and two minutes later we ceased fire, as she appeared to be completely disabled, and was sinking fast.

We now sighted three battleships, and at 7.6 shifted target on to the left-hand one of them—they were ships of the *König* class, carrying two funnels wide apart. We opened fire at a range of 10,750 yards, and fired 14 salvoes. The sixth, the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth were all distinct hits. From the sixth salvo a large cloud of grey smoke appeared near her foremast, and from the twelfth salvo two hits could be seen under her bridge, rather low down.



TORPEDOING OF "MARLBOROUGH."

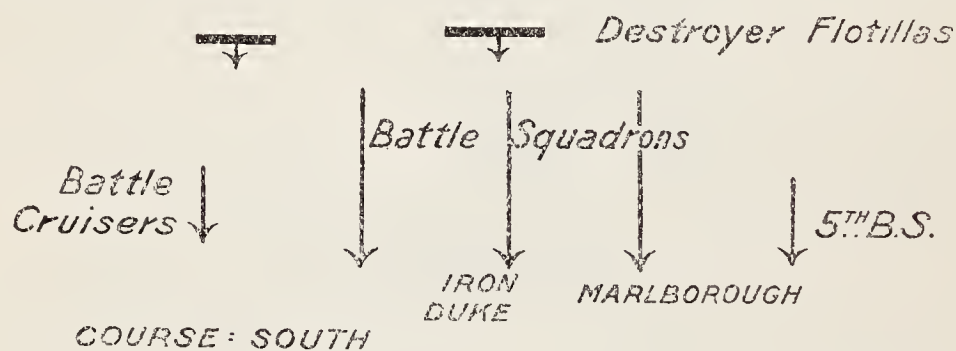
At 7.10 we fired a torpedo from the fore submerged tube at the disabled enemy cruiser. At 7.19 a flotilla of German destroyers appeared on our starboard quarter, approaching us, and fire was quickly opened upon them with the 6-inch battery. Also one 13.5-inch salvo was fired from the turrets. Two destroyers were hit, and the remainder immediately turned away to starboard and disappeared from sight behind a dense cloud of funnel smoke. Fourteen minutes later (7.33) the tracks of the torpedoes they had fired were observed approaching from the starboard bow and beam. The tracks were quite clear to us from aloft, and could be picked out when nearly a mile away. At once we reported to the bridge, and they altered



## Chap. VIII.—The German Destroyer Attacks.

course to starboard, so that No. 1 track, the furthest off, passed ahead of us, but Nos. 2 and 3 were nearly on top of us before the ship commenced swinging. No. 2 passed so close to the stern that we lost sight of its track from the top, and we should certainly have been hit if the stern had not been swinging away under the influence of helm; and No. 3, which I saw break surface when about 500 yards on our beam, came straight for the ship, and its track came right up against our starboard quarter—it must have been running below its depth and went right under the ship. The fact that these three were as clear as daylight, whereas no track was visible from the torpedo that had hit us at 6.54, made one think that it was a mine, not a torpedo by which we had been hit, but, as I said, other certain evidence showed that it was a torpedo.

The action for us was now finished, although we did not think so at the time. At 8 o'clock, as a result of our torpedo hit, we were reduced to a maximum speed of 17 knots, which fact was reported to the Commander-in-Chief, but we were able to keep our station leading our squadron.



### NIGHT DISPOSITIONS.

At 8.15 a submarine was sighted from the bridge on the starboard side, but we did not see anything from aloft.

The course of the fleet at 8.20 was W.S.W., and at 8.32 south-west. The 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron reported that they were engaging enemy's cruisers, and at 8.40 a report from the battle cruisers stated that the nearest enemy ships were 10 to 11 miles distant, their battle cruisers and pre-Dreadnought battleships steering S.W., speed 17 knots; but no enemy were in sight from us. At five minutes to nine some light cruisers were in sight off *Marlborough's* starboard beam—that is, to the north-west—and some destroyers were approaching from the west. An action commenced just abaft our starboard beam, and we could see German destroyers attacking a light cruiser squadron, but nothing further happened. (This was probably the *Southampton's* squadron, the 2nd L.C.S.)

At 9.5 the course of the battle fleet was south, and from the van battle squadron (2nd B.S.) came a report that the enemy's battle cruisers were in sight, steering south-west, but we could see no enemy our end of the line.



At a quarter past nine all destroyers were ordered to take station 5 miles astern of the battle fleet, and we took up night cruising order, expecting to be attacked by German destroyers during the night. The battle fleet squadrons were in single line, 1 mile apart, *Marlborough* leading the port, *i.e.* the easterly line, or rather the easterly but one, the actual wing column being the four ships of the 5th B.S.

During the night we saw no enemy, but there were signs of actions being fought to starboard or astern of us most of the night. There was firing on our starboard beam at 10.15 p.m., and again at 10.40; at 11.40 gunfire was reported astern, and at 12.10 a very heavy explosion, like a ship blowing up, was seen and heard, accompanied by heavy gunfire.

. . . . .

The ship was now settling somewhat from the effects of our torpedo hit, several compartments around the hit being flooded, and at 2 a.m. we were unable to keep station at 17 knots. Accordingly the Vice-Admiral signalled to *Revenge* his intention of transferring his flag to her, and at 2.15 we hauled out of the line, the light cruiser, *Fearless*, coming alongside us to take Admiral Burney off to the *Revenge*.<sup>1</sup> At 3 a.m. the Commander-in-Chief directed *Marlborough* to proceed "to the Tyne or Rosyth," and we shaped course for the Tyne.

Nothing exciting happened before 10 a.m., June 1st, except that at 4 a.m. we saw a Zeppelin passing astern of us steering east, and we unloaded our 13.5-inch guns at him, and also fired a dozen 3-inch shells from our anti-aircraft gun. He dipped suddenly after we fired, but then continued on his course apparently undamaged. Intercepted signals from various ships gave us the idea that the enemy could not be found, and

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from Narrative from H.M.S. "Fearless."

At daylight on June 1st a signal was made to us to proceed alongside *Marlborough* and transfer Vice-Admiral Burney and his staff to the *Revenge*. We then saw the leading ship of the line—H.M.S. *Marlborough*—haul out, and to our surprise saw that she had a heavy list, for not till then had we realised the object of the transfer of the flag. At 2.45 a.m. we went alongside the *Marlborough* and embarked the Vice-Admiral and his staff. Meanwhile the remainder of the squadron had steamed out of our sight into the fog, but as soon as the Admiral and staff were on board we shoved off, found the *Revenge*, and made a signal to her to stop, and informed her that we were coming alongside. She stopped, and at 3.10 a.m. we steamed alongside, and soon embarked the Admiral and his staff in her. We then returned to the assistance of the *Marlborough*, with orders to remain with her and escort her back to the base, which we duly did, leading her into the Humber on the morning of the second day after the battle.

## Chap. VIII.—The German Destroyer Attacks.

there were signals from *Warrior*, *Warspite*, etc., reporting the extent of their damages, etc. Altogether the situation appeared to be rather confused, and it was difficult to tell whether we were missing any fighting or not.

At 10 a.m. we sighted two enemy submarines ahead, both with conning towers awash; shortly afterwards they dived. We altered course 8 points to port immediately, and did not sight them again, but at 11 o'clock the track of a torpedo was seen on our port side, apparently fired from one of these submarines, then almost astern of us. But it was not necessary even to alter course to avoid the torpedo, as it came past the port side and on across our bows well clear. *Fearless*, which was zigzagging ahead of us, avoided it. Our course was now West, and speed 13 knots.

At 2.15 p.m. an escort of four Harwich destroyers, which had been ordered to join us, were met, and a little later we sighted Commodore Tyrwhitt's force steering to the east, but apparently they were arriving too late for the action.

About 8 p.m. on June 1st we reported our draught of water to the Commander-in-Chief, in response to his signal for information. It was now 39 feet, nearly 10 feet deeper than our normal draught at full load. The wind and sea had risen a good deal, and it was now unpleasant North Sea weather, blowing fresh, rather cold, and the sea getting up. One of our escorting destroyers, H.M.S. *Albatross*, at 11 p.m., had to separate, as she could not keep up with us in this weather.

At midnight we had to signal that the water was gaining, and that, instead of going to Rosyth which we had received an order by wireless to do, we were making for Flamborough Head at 10 knots. Under lee of the land, however, the weather moderated, and by 4 a.m., June 2nd, we were keeping the water under, and were able to signal that we did not require the tugs which were being sent to our assistance from the Humber and the Tyne. At 8.30 a.m., June 2nd, we entered the Humber and secured to a buoy; our draught of water then was exactly 40 feet.

Whilst lying in the Humber we made temporary shoring-up arrangements round the position of the torpedo hit to strengthen the adjacent bulkheads; pumped out the water and got more pumps on board. We then sailed for the Tyne under our own steam, and there went into the floating dock for proper repairs. We found that the damage done by the torpedo was far greater than we had expected, the extreme length of the hole being 70 feet, with a depth of 20 feet at the point of the explosion.

For six weeks repairs were carried out by the combined shipbuilding firms on the Tyne, and the opportunity was taken at the same time to make some structural alterations which were desired. One thousand workmen were employed aboard us, working day and night, so that six weeks after the battle we left the dock and rejoined the Grand Fleet up North, no worse for the torpedo hit on us, but indeed a more efficient ship than we had been before the action.

## Chapter IX.



### HOOD'S BATTLE CRUISER SQUADRON.



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## CHAPTER IX.

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### Hood's Battle Cruiser Squadron.

*In the matter of time we must now go back a little to describe the movements of the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron, which under the command of Rear-Admiral Hon. Horace Hood flying his flag in H.M.S. "Invincible," had come into action about 5.36 p.m.*

*It may be recalled that this squadron, consisting of the three battle cruisers "Invincible," "Inflexible," and "Indomitable," were, at the end of May, doing exercises at Scapa Flow with the battle fleet, their place at Rosyth being taken by Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas' 5th Battle Squadron, "Barham," "Malaya," "Warspite," and "Valiant." Accordingly the 3rd B.C.S. were in company with the battle fleet, and not with the Rosyth battle cruisers, during the early part of the action.*

*At 4.0 p.m. on 31st May Admiral Jellicoe ordered Hood's squadron to reinforce Vice-Admiral Beatty, and the three battle cruisers, accompanied by two light cruisers, "Chester" and "Canterbury," and four destroyers, "Shark," "Christopher," "Ophelia," and "Acasta," went off at full speed to join Admiral Beatty's force, whose reports of his position and of the progress of the battle cruiser action were being received by wireless in the Grand Fleet.*

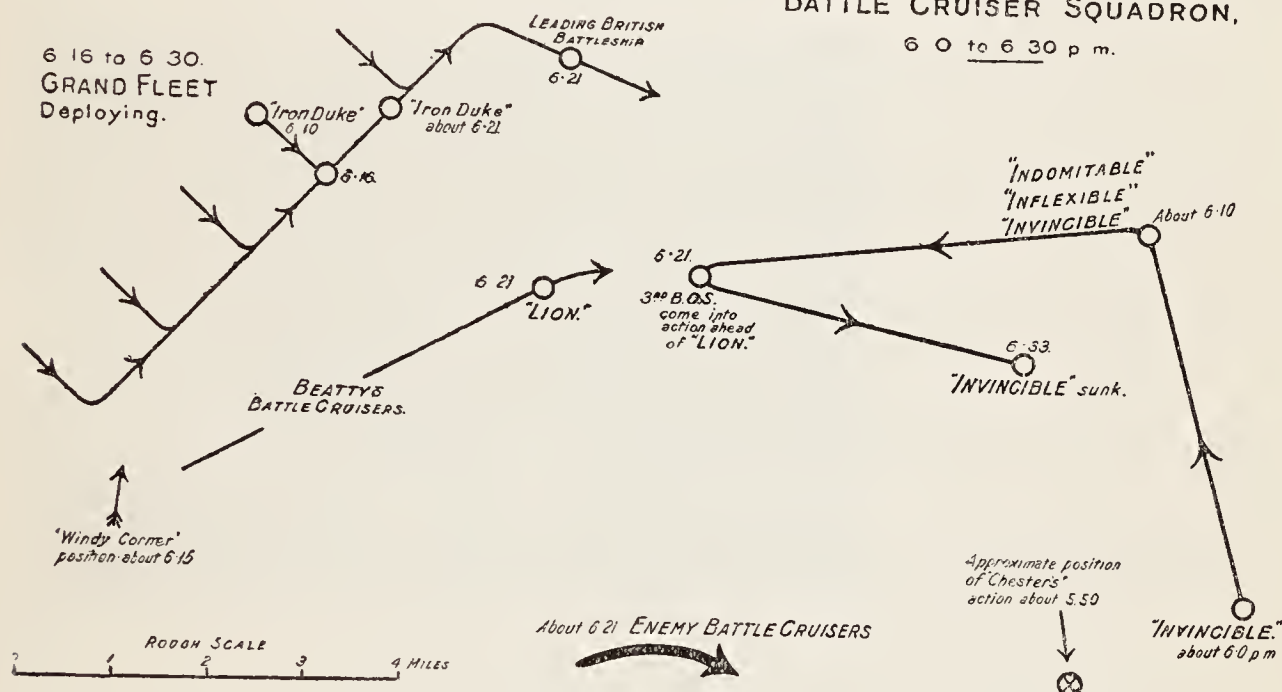
*About 5.30 p.m.—at which time that part of the action known as the Battle Cruiser Run to the North was nearing its end—Hood's squadron heard sounds of gunfire to the south-westward, and at 5.36 sighted some enemy light cruisers to the westward.<sup>1</sup> Hood was then some 15 or 20 miles ahead of the Grand Fleet, and had nearly over-run the position of the Battle Cruiser forces. An action followed with the enemy ships and with some other light cruisers that later came in sight, Hood's three battle cruisers, the "Chester," the "Canterbury," and the four destroyers, all being engaged. Apparently the visibility was very variable, and in certain directions was as little as 5,000 yards, or even less, and the light craft of the squadron became detached from the battle cruisers, so that several separate actions were fought by the different ships of Hood's force.*

*H.M.S. "Shark" was disabled and shortly afterwards sunk in this action. H.M.S. "Acasta" was damaged and lay stopped in the path of the Grand*

<sup>1</sup> NOTE.—The authority for these and similar statements is principally the narratives in this chapter, but it is difficult to be accurate in such facts as the bearing upon which the enemy were first sighted, for the evidence is scanty and occasionally contradictory.

*Fleet as they deployed into battle line. “At about 6.30, having barged through our own destroyer flotillas ahead of the battle fleet—guided by Providence, for we had no steering gear to guide the ship with—we at last got the ship stopped, and lying there only about 200 yards from the battle line, held a very fine review of the Grand Fleet coming into action, as ship after ship passed us. The men were very excited and cheered each ship as she passed, some to port and some to starboard, particularly the Commander-in-Chief in the ‘Iron Duke.’ We hoisted the ‘Not under control’ signal, and endeavoured to tell the battleships that we were unable to move, for it would have been an ignominious end to have been run down by our own fleet. Fortunately they all dodged us. . . .”*

ROUGH DIAGRAM TO ILLUSTRATE  
MOVEMENTS OF HOOD'S (3RD)  
BATTLE CRUISER SQUADRON,  
6 0 to 6 30 p. m.



*H.M.S. "Chester," scouting for Hood's B.C.S., also came suddenly into action with three German light cruisers and suffered a number of casualties, but fortunately retained her full steaming powers. It is worth while stating again that the visibility at this time was low and the situation confused; gunfire was loud, and appeared to come from the south, or from the south-west or south-east, according to the exact position of the listening ship, but this was apparently the only means of telling the exact position where Beatty's battle cruisers were in action. Just before 6.10 p.m. Hood turned to a north-west course thinking he had over-run the position of the battle, and then at 6.10 p.m. sighted the "Lion," followed by "Princess Royal," "Tiger," etc., in action with the enemy battle cruisers which were being driven*

*aside to the east and south-east. Hood swung his squadron into line immediately ahead of the "Lion," and at 6.21 opened fire upon the enemy battle cruisers. The course was now east.*

*By the time Admiral Hood had thus joined up with Admiral Beatty the latter had practically crossed the front of the Grand Fleet, having at 5.56 increased to full speed and turned more to starboard to close and drive the enemy battle cruisers away from the Battle Fleet, so that the action into which Hood now joined at about 6.21 was being fought roughly 2 miles ahead, i.e., to the south-east of our leading battleship. The enemy that were being engaged were the big ships—some reports say battleships as well as battle cruisers—at the head of the enemy's battle line.*

*The rest of the explanation of the 3rd B.C.S.'s movements is contained in their narratives, and need only be supplemented by this extract from Vice-Admiral Beatty's despatch describing events from the time he sighted them at 6.10 p.m.:—*

*"I ordered them to take station ahead, which was carried out magnificently, Rear-Admiral Hood bringing his squadron into action ahead in a most inspiring manner, worthy of his great naval ancestors. At 6.25 p.m. I altered course to the E.S.E., in support of the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron, who were at this time only 8,000 yards from the enemy's leading ship. They were pouring a hot fire into her, and caused her to turn to the westward of south. At the same time I made a visual report to the Commander-in-Chief of the bearing and distance of the enemy battle fleet. At 6.33 p.m. 'Invincible' blew up.*

*"After the loss of 'Invincible,' the squadron was led by 'Inflexible' until 6.50 p.m. By this time the battle cruisers were clear of our leading battle squadron, then bearing about N.N.W. 3 miles, and I ordered the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron to prolong the line astern and reduced to 18 knots. . . ."*

*Admiral Hood went down in the "Invincible" with the 1,025 officers and men who formed her crew. There were only six survivors.*

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### Narrative from H.M.S. "Indomitable."

(Third and Rear Battle Cruiser of Admiral Hood's Squadron.)

[The account which follows is compiled from the note-book which I kept in the fore turret of H.M.S. *Indomitable* during the action. Some slight discrepancy may be noticed in the times given, as my watch was only hastily compared with G.M.T. before the action.

The ranges given are those on the gun-sights at the time; courses during the action are only approximate. Although my field of vision through the slit in the turret hood was necessarily limited I was able to



"INVINCIBLE" GOING INTO  
ACTION.

Taken from Next Astern.



The Destruction  
of H.M.S.  
"Invincible."



THE SMOKE CLOUD OF  
THE EXPLOSION.

THE WRECK—POW AND  
STERN SHOWING,  
WITH DESTROYER  
"BADGER" PICKING UP  
SURVIVORS.



[To face page 128.



6.0 p.m.

Narrative from H.M.S. "Indomitable."

observe the enemy closely when engaged, and during lulls in the firing could obtain a comprehensive view of the general course of the fight from the top of the turret.]

The first intimation that we had of any possibility of an action was at 2.23 p.m., when *Galatea* reported enemy ships in sight, and we intercepted her signal. At that time we were stationed ahead of the battle fleet, steering S. 50° E., and zigzagging, the speed of advance being 14 knots. The wireless office could hear Telefunken signals, strength 10, very loud and strong. At 3.57 p.m. we heard from the *Lion* that they were engaging the enemy, and shortly afterwards the sounds of heavy gunfire were plainly audible, and flashes were visible on the horizon.

The weather at this time was clear, but with patches of thin mist near the horizon, and visibility of approximately 16,000 yards; the wind was S.W., force 2, and the sea smooth.

At 5.40 p.m. course was altered about 8 points to starboard, and at 5.50 p.m. *Invincible* opened fire on a three-funnelled light cruiser bearing 40° on the port bow, and was followed five minutes later by *Inflexible* and *Indomitable*, the squadron being in line ahead in that order. We could see, off the port bow, a light cruiser of the *Canterbury* class apparently stopped or moving very slowly, and heavily engaged with a squadron of four enemy light cruisers, which were advancing for torpedo attack. One of these was a four-funnelled cruiser, and seemed to be of the *Rostock* class.

Our opening range was 11,200 yards, closing by 6.0 p.m. to 8,900 yards. We had steamed between our own light cruiser and the enemy, and had severely handled them, one of the Germans disappearing in a great cloud of steam and smoke which remained for a long time over one spot, so that I have no doubt at all that she sank; and another, a three-funnelled cruiser, was badly on fire amidships, apparently stopped and settling down but I did not see her sink as we turned away to avoid torpedoes which were crossing the track. I could not see these torpedo tracks from the turret, of course, but was told afterwards that four had been sighted; one passed under the ship, one passed ahead, one a few yards astern, and one was observed by the gunnery officer to be running slowly along the starboard side of the ship a few yards off and parallel to the ship, its distinctive red head being particularly noticeable. The enemy now made off, and were attacked at 6.9 p.m. by our destroyers, with what result the smoke and haze made it impossible to observe.

The noise of firing now became like the roll of continuous thunder, and the horizon to port was filled with whirling sheets of flame. Through the mist we could distinguish the Rosyth battle cruisers hotly engaged with the enemy, whose number and class we could not make out. At 6.13 p.m. the *Invincible* stopped, and clouds of steam came from her exhaust pipes, but she appeared to be undamaged, and hoisting the "Disregard" signal shortly after went ahead at 20 knots with the signal to form single line ahead flying. It was the last time I saw her as a ship.



We were now (6.20 p.m.) heavily engaged with the enemy battle cruisers and with, I think, the head of his battle line, the range being 8,200 yards, bearing 90 Green. Suddenly my left gun ceased firing. The thin metal bulkhead which had been built round the sighting position to render it, as far as possible, sound-proof prevented me from seeing what was wrong, and for a few moments I could get no reply to my enquiries from the loading officer. This was exasperating, and I began to fear that the turret had been hit although I had felt no concussion, when the welcome report came that it was only a cordite charge that had jammed and broken up.

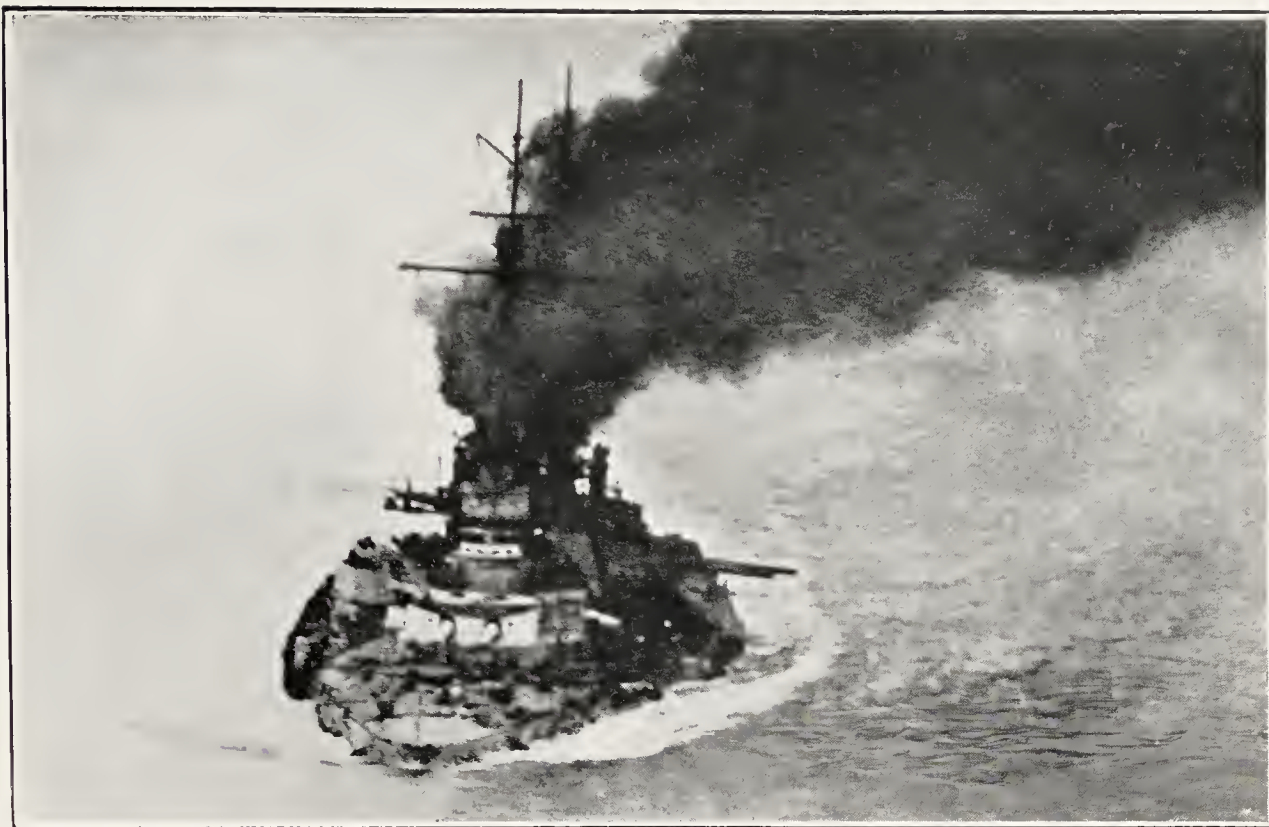
It took but a short time to clear the jam, and two hands, with their arms full of cordite sticks, went up to the roof of the turret and threw them over the side. Both guns were in action again at 6.40 p.m., and we went into "Independent" at a range of 8,600 yards. I think it was as well that my cabinet was sound-proof, as my loading officer told me afterwards that the left gunlayer's language was of the rare and fruity variety!

The enemy's shooting at this time was unpleasantly good, and I observed several salvoes burst alongside, and could hear the whistle of "overs." There was a belief that the enemy used shrapnel for a few rounds, but I cannot confirm that from personal observation. Certainly the shell splinters found on board were very small, and this may have given rise to the report. An entry in my note-book at this time reads, "Enemy salvoes bursting close."

At 6.35 p.m. we altered course slightly to port, reverting to controlled fire at a range of 10,700 yards. Then upon the starboard bow I saw the two ends of a ship standing perpendicularly above water, the ship appearing to have broken in halves amidships, each half resting on the bottom. My gunlayer took her for a Hun, and the crew cheered, but I could read the name *Invincible* on the stern and so knew better. Four or five survivors were clinging to floating wreckage; I have never seen anything more splendid than these few cheering us as we raced by them.

The weather now got very much thicker, and at 6.42 p.m. fire was checked, a few minutes after which the 1st B.C.S. came up, and we turned round from ahead to take station astern of them, in the order—*Lion, Princess Royal, Tiger, New Zealand, Indomitable, Inflexible*. As we turned we could see that the *Lion* had a small fire just abaft the foremast, and we learned afterwards that our arrival on the scene was most opportune, as it gave the crews of the 1st B.C.S. a brief "stand easy," and enabled them to put out various fires. It was generally agreed that the period 6.20 to 6.42 p.m. was the hottest part of the action, and observers in the *Princess Royal* have said that they expected every moment to see us share the fate of the *Invincible*.

We could now see the battle fleet coming up astern in three columns, and at 7.12 p.m. they re-opened fire. The spectacle was truly magnificent, tongues of flame seeming to leap from end to end of the line, but owing to the dusk and smoke we could not see what practice they were making.



GERMAN BATTLE CRUISER "SEYDLITZ" BADLY DAMAGED AND DOWN BY THE BOW.  
Taken from Ahead.



GERMAN BATTLE CRUISER "SEYDLITZ" BADLY DAMAGED AND DOWN BY THE BOW.

[To face page 130.





At 7.20 p.m. we re-opened fire at the enemy battle cruisers at a range of 14,000 yards, our squadron apparently making splendid practice. Time after time a dull orange glow would appear on board one or other of their ships, a glow which increased and brightened, then slowly dulled; yet, in spite of these hits, the enemy's volume of fire did not seem appreciably to diminish. One big ship turned out of her line to starboard, her after part enveloped in flame, and began slowly to drop astern. The remainder emitted dense volumes of smoke, which hung above the water like a pall, and through which, at 7.25 p.m., we could see about a dozen destroyers racing towards our line. Orders came through for the 4-inch guns' crews to close up, and, as the change of bearing was passed and the turret swung round, I could hear the staccato bark of these small guns joining in the general din. As the destroyers cleared the smoke screen, white pillars began to leap up amongst them like giant nine-pins, to be knocked down and spring up again without ceasing as the big guns came into action. Almost half the distance had been covered by the attackers, when I saw two of these white towers of water rise simultaneously in front of the left-hand boat of the line, and as they sank no thrusting bow came through the spray, only a thinning streak of smoke. . . .

The 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron astern turned out to starboard and engaged the flotilla with 6-inch guns, and shortly afterwards the enemy swung round and sped back, but not before I had seen a second boat hit and destroyed.

The officer of "X" turret told me an amusing yarn of his turret during this attack. His gunlayer was a very smart man, but not above drawing the long bow, I'm afraid, and the trainer, though an excellent trainer, was rather slow-witted. The conversation between the two was something like this:—

*Gunlayer.*—"Train right—Train right—Little more."—BANG.

*Trainer.*—"What were you firing at?"

*Gunlayer.*—"Destroyer."

*Trainer.*—"I can't see it."

*Gunlayer.*—"No. I've sunk her. Train right—Right—Right"—BANG.

*Trainer.*—"I didn't see it."

*Gunlayer.*—"Nother destroyer. I've sunk her. Train right again—Too much—Left a little."—BANG.

*Trainer* (pathetically).—"I can't see *anything*."

After the action I believe the gunlayer was claiming eight boats to his own gun!

The enemy now increased his range, and fire was checked at 7.40 p.m., but astern of us the firing was continuous, although it was impossible to make out the ships engaged. This lull seemed a good opportunity for sending a few men away from the turret to get food for the remainder, which was accordingly done. Shortly afterwards we passed a small skiff, painted grey, of apparently German origin, containing the bodies of two

## Chap. IX.—Hood's Battle Cruisers.

men, and round about was a quantity of wreckage and oil, but, of course, we did not stop to enquire into what it was.

At 8.20 p.m., unexpectedly, the enemy battle cruisers were again sighted closing towards us, and a few seconds later they opened fire. Most of my turret's crew had come up on top for a breath of fresh air and to hunt for splinters as souvenirs, so they tumbled back to their stations in a hurry, and by 8.26 p.m. we were hard at it again at a range of 8,800 yards. The German firing was fairly good, and we were straddled several times. Many of our squadron's salvoes hit, and large fires were observed on board several of their ships, and their speed seemed to decrease. By 8.42 p.m. they had had enough and drew off, so we ceased firing, although other ships in the squadron continued for a little time longer. At 8.44 p.m. a distinct shock and muffled explosion was felt and heard, but no damage could be discovered, nor could any definite cause be assigned to the occurrence.

At 9.0 p.m. heavy firing was heard astern, and 10 minutes later a solitary star shell was seen, followed by one heavy salvo. Firing then ceased. The south-westerly course was continued during the night, but, as far as we were concerned, nothing exciting happened during the night, apart from sighting many gun flashes from 11.45 to 12.30 a.m.

Should it be my good fortune to be engaged in another action, I shall take care that only one gramophone is taken into the turret. In my turret we had two, one in the gun-house and one in the working chamber, and during every lull in the action these two were started playing simultaneously, each with a different record. The result was one of the real horrors of the war.

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### Narrative of H.M.S. "Chester."

(Light Cruiser attached to Rear-Admiral Hood's (3rd) Battle Cruiser Squadron.)

*Extract from Commander-in-Chief's Despatch, Para. 7:—*

*"At 5.30 p.m. . . . the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron . . . observed flashes of gunfire and heard the sound of guns to the south-westward. Rear-Admiral Hood sent the 'Chester' (Captain Robert N. Lawson) to investigate, and this ship engaged three or four enemy light cruisers at about 5.45 p.m. The engagement lasted for about twenty minutes, during which period Captain Lawson handled his vessel with great skill against heavy odds, and although the ship suffered considerably in casualties, her fighting and steaming qualities were unimpaired, and at about 6.5 p.m. she rejoined the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron."*



*Extract from Narrative of an Officer of H.M.S. "Castor":—*

" . . . The 'Chester' came close across our bows from east to west, with four big holes in her along her main deck, and her ship's company cheering through the holes as she passed us."

H.M.S. *Chester* had commissioned at Liverpool on 2nd May, 1916, and from there had proceeded to Scapa Flow to work up gunnery and other exercises before joining up with the 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron. We had only arrived at Scapa on 15th May, so that we were lucky to be allowed to accompany the Grand Fleet when it put to sea on the evening of the 30th May; we had returned to our anchorage only that afternoon after carrying out a battle practice.

The position we were detailed to take up in the fleet was one about 20 miles ahead of the fleet flagship, between the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron and the armoured cruiser screen which was in front of the battle fleet, about 8 miles from each. For these two forces we acted as a connecting link for passing in signals, reports of the enemy, etc., to the fleet flagship.

□ □ □ □ □ □  
*Battle Fleet in 6 Columns*

*Armoured Cruiser Screen*  
8 miles  
0 "CHESTER"  
8 miles  
3rd B.C.S. | "Invincible"

We got the first news of the enemy about 2.30 p.m., and naturally, during the succeeding three hours before we ourselves were in touch with the enemy but were intercepting the frequent reports of the action between the rival battle cruiser fleets, we were anxiously wondering whether we should arrive in time to share in the scrap. It was a beautifully clear afternoon, but soon after 5 p.m. it thickened to the south-westward and westward, and visibility in that direction decreased to 5 or 7 miles.

At about 5.25 p.m., when we were steering a south-south-easterly course, we sighted flashes of guns to the south-west, on our starboard bow, and at once altered course to investigate, signalling to the Rear-Admiral of the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron the reason for our alteration.

At the same time as we turned to investigate these gun flashes, we increased to full speed, and in a very short time sighted light cruisers about 2 points on the port bow steering approximately north-north-west. Seen dimly through the mist they appeared to be not unlike our 1st Light Cruiser Squadron. We altered to a course parallel to them, challenging at the same time, but this was somewhat superfluous as almost immediately we saw the flash of gunfire ripple along the side of the leading light cruiser, and at the same moment we sighted a destroyer with her mast stepped aft—a sure sign of a Hun.

The enemy's first salvo fell a good 2,000 yards beyond us, the second from 500 to 700 yards short, and then most of the third came on board—a very good bit of target-finding one must admit. A few seconds before this I think we had got our first salvo off, and it was also incidentally our last, for the majority of the guns' crews, and all the voice pipe and



electrical communications were smashed up by the salvo of the enemy which hit us. From this point things became pretty brisk on board, the whole of the enemy light cruiser squadron concentrating on us, and several salvos hit us. The odds were obviously more than we could stand, and as our guns were only firing spasmodically, and the range registered by our range-takers had come down to as little as 5,600 yards, the Captain decided to endeavour to fall back on the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron for support. We therefore altered away on to a mean course of north-east, which brought our opponents astern, and zigzagged to dodge the enemy's salvos. The zig-zagging was done by steering into the splash of each salvo immediately after it fell, which entirely upset the deflection of the enemy, and he seldom obtained a hit after we commenced doing this, although he kept close all the time. The salvos fell alternately first on one bow and then on the other, usually only a few yards from the forecastle. Most of the shells burst on striking the sea, and drenched everyone on the bridge with black and most unpleasant-smelling water. During our turn away we tried to get off a torpedo from the port torpedo tube, but owing to some hang-up below, it unfortunately failed to fire. We tried again later, but with the same result.

During this run our quarter-deck guns were the only guns that would bear, and they were in local control without the assistance of any fire-control instruments, so I fear that little if any damage was done to the enemy. Fortunately no part of the engine-room or boilers was damaged, and when we rang down to the engine-room the signal for emergency full speed—a movement of the pointer in quick succession from "Full ahead" to "Full astern"—the engineers worked the ship up to a speed of 28 knots (that is, revolutions for 28 knots), although the maximum speed made during our trials four weeks ago had been only  $26\frac{1}{2}$  knots. By this good work we gradually increased our range from the enemy. While we were zigzagging, a report of the helm jamming hard-a-port gave us an unpleasant moment's fright, but luckily it cleared again almost instantly, and we kept on our escaping course.

About 5.50 p.m. we sighted some large ships on the starboard bow, and, as these came clearer through the mist, we identified them as the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron. We passed about three cables ahead of the *Invincible*, and as we did so the latter opened fire on our late opponents, and I had the satisfaction of observing a hit obtained on one of them.

I think that the total number of direct hits we received was eighteen, but we also were hit by a large amount of splinters from shells bursting in the water. My own idea of affairs on the bridge was a hail storm. We had about five fires, chiefly cordite ones, but they were fairly easily got under.<sup>1</sup> The engine-room fortunately was not hit, although the wreckage and débris found in some spaces just above showed that the escape had been a narrow one. One high explosive shell had burst inside the foremost

<sup>1</sup> H.M.S. *Chester's* casualties were : 2 officers and 33 men killed, 3 officers and 39 men wounded.

funnel, entering the port side and blowing out a hole about 6 feet by 8 feet large on the starboard side.

They said in the engine-room that their strongest desire all the time was to "makee-look-see" what was happening, but from the time in the early afternoon when they had received a message from the Captain, "If we wished to see any of the fun, it was time to hustle," to the time when the ship was being badly hit and emergency full speed was ordered, the whole staff were busy at their job, and had no opportunity for sight-seeing.

The engine-room mascot, a black kitten, was taken to its action station below when action was sounded off and apparently did its duty nobly! The men down below found the gases and smoke which came down the ventilating trunks directly succeeding the crash of a shell hitting the ship, to be very nauseous and unpleasant, requiring respirators to be worn all the time. But there seemed to be a divided opinion as to whether the nastiness of the antidote solution which is put on the respirators was a cure for, or a worse evil than, the nauseous taste of the gases themselves!

An example of a lucky escape in an above-deck station was the control officer in the after control position, a position abaft the funnels approximately over the engine-rooms, about 10 feet above the level of the upper deck. Two shells burst in this control position, removing the whole place except one small piece in one corner, about 2 feet square. The actual range-finder—an instrument weighing several hundredweight—which was mounted in the centre of the control position, was blown bodily over the side, together with every man of the crew except the Control Officer. But he, happening to be in this particular little corner that was spared, escaped with no more than a few slight burns.

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### Narrative from H.M.S. "Badger."

The Destroyer which Rescued the Six Survivors of H.M.S. "Invincible."

H.M.S. "Invincible" was sunk at 6.33 p.m.

**Commander-in-Chief's Despatch :—**"At 6.55 p.m. 'Iron Duke' passed the wreck of 'Invincible,' with 'Badger' standing by. . . ."

About 6.15 I noticed the *Invincible* and the two other battle cruisers appear out of the mist, which was thick on the disengaged side though fairly clear to the southward, and swing magnificently into line ahead of the *Lion*, opening fire as they did so. Shortly afterwards the *Defence*, *Warrior*, *Black Prince*, and one other cruiser also appeared suddenly out of the mist, and cut across the *Lion's* bow; a few minutes later the *Defence* blew up and the others were put out of action, though I did not see exactly what happened to them.



Hardly had we recovered from the shock of this disaster—it lasted only three or four minutes—when the main Grand Fleet, with destroyers and light cruisers leading them, bore down upon us like an avalanche from out of the mist on the disengaged side. We put our helm hard over to avoid collision, and just managed to squeeze through the gap by closing the *Lion*. As the Grand Fleet deployed into line to the north-east or east-north-east, we received a signal from the *Lion*, “Pick up survivors from wreck on starboard side,” where we could see what appeared to be the bow and stern of a light cruiser sticking up out of the water.<sup>1</sup>

Assuming this to be a German wreck and that we should have prisoners to pick up, I sent to have an armed guard detailed, and warned our doctor to be ready to tend wounded prisoners. A few minutes later I received exactly similar orders from the Captain. In the meantime, we had cut through a gap between the battle cruisers, and were heading towards the wreck in “No Man's Land,” between the two fleets. As we neared

Rescue of  
“*Invincible*”  
Survivors.

the wreck we could see the water all round thick with flotsam and jetsam, mainly composed of floating seamen's kit bags, with a few hammocks scattered amongst them. We also spotted a raft on which were four men, and on the bridge they spotted two other survivors in the water. By orders from the Captain I lowered and sent away the whaler, with our gunner in charge armed with a service revolver. The Captain brought the ship alongside the raft, and I waited with the doctor and the armed guard ready to receive German survivors. Judge of my surprise, when the raft was almost alongside, to see a Commander R.N., a Lieutenant R.N., and two seamen ratings on it. In my surprise I forgot to dismiss the armed guard, who, no doubt considering that it was that for which they were there, wanted to seize on the unfortunate survivors as we hauled them on board. However, I quickly sent the guard away and apologised to the Commander, who only treated it as a good joke. It was a great shock to us when he made us understand that the wreck we were near was the remains of the battle cruiser *Invincible*, and that we were picking up the only six survivors from her ship's company of a thousand men.

The Commander was really marvellously self-possessed. I can hardly understand to this day how a man, after going through what he had, could come on board us from the raft as cheerily as if he was simply joining a new ship in the ordinary course of events. He laughed at the armed guard, and assured us that he hadn't a scratch on his whole body, and that he had merely—as he put it—stepped into the water when the fore-top came down.

The Lieutenant was rather more shaken, and small wonder, for he had been in the conning tower when the ship blew up, and had had to climb out of it and scramble up the sloping deck to the bridge screens, where

<sup>1</sup> H.M.S. *Invincible* had been hit amidships and cut by the explosion into two nearly equal halves, the central ends of which seem to have been resting on the bottom. The depth of water was about 25 to 30 fathoms, i.e., 150 to 180 feet. As H.M.S. *Invincible* was 590 feet long, there was therefore some 100 feet or so of each end of the ship which could show above water.





H.M.S. "INVINCIBLE" BLOWING UP; 6.33 P.M.

Photo showing the Flames shooting out of her midship and foremost Turrets. Taken from a Destroyer at the very moment she commenced to blow up.  
The Two Officer Survivors were in the Conning Tower and Spotting Top.



he was almost immediately engulfed in the water. He told us that he was sucked down once or twice by eddies and had almost given up hope, when he at last broke surface, and with the aid of a floating kit-bag propelled himself to the raft on which the Commander was already seated. The two seamen from the raft appeared to be quite all right, but I did not get an opportunity of questioning them as to their experiences. Of the two men picked up from the water, one, a private of marines, was badly burnt, and later suffered great pain, though he eventually recovered. He told us later that he was in some cabinet at the rear of a turret, but remembered nothing about the explosion until he found himself in the water.

As we were hoisting our boat in again, the Germans apparently spotted us, and dropped a few shells round us, but after steaming slowly round the wreckage to make sure that there was no more survivors, we rang down full speed, and made off to rejoin our flotilla with the *Lion*.





## Chapter X.



### SIDE SHOWS.

The Adventures of Light Craft during the  
Battle Fleet Action.



Narratives from

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## CHAPTER X.

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### The 4th Light Cruiser Squadron.

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#### Narrative from H.M.S. "Calliope," Flagship of the 4th L.C.S.

The 4th Light Cruiser Squadron accompanied the battle fleet from Scapa to the scene of operations. Our cruising position before deployment was 4 miles ahead of the battle squadrons, and subsequently, when the battle fleet deployed to port, we formed part of a large number of light cruisers and torpedo craft stationed on the starboard (engaged) bow of the leading battle squadron to repel hostile torpedo attacks, or attack in our turn if ordered.

The deployment of the battle fleet was a wonderful sight, and although we were too far away to watch the detailed movements of each squadron, we had a good view of it. From our distance the whole fleet seemed to be mixed up for a few minutes in apparently inextricable confusion, and then quite suddenly to be formed in one long, regular line, on the starboard bow of which we took station and whose rear end we could not see in the mist. Just after deployment we saw the destroyer *Acasta* in a very bad way, down by the head, on fire, and not under control, coming from the direction of the firing; she passed astern of us and ahead of the approaching battleships. Shortly afterwards, about 6.15 as far as I remember, we sighted the squadron of battle cruisers under Rear-Admiral Horace Hood which had come from Scapa with the battle fleet. As they were stationed well ahead of the battleships they got into action first, and had joined the Rosyth battle cruiser force which were heavily engaged with an enemy quite invisible to us. But we were not wholly unconcerned in the affair as we were getting some of the "overs" rather too close to be pleasant, being about a mile on the battle cruisers' disengaged beam. As we watched we saw an enormous flash burst out from the *Invincible*, followed by a large volume of grey smoke which eddied up in the form of a cumulus cloud, and when it disappeared her two halves were distinctly visible, standing upright in the water, and probably resting on the bottom.

Subsequently we had an excellent view of the actual battle fleet action from our station on the leading battle squadron's engaged bow, and specially noticed one of the German *Kaiser* class battleships with her bridge and fore-

part enveloped in brilliant red flames. Our squadron were detailed during this interval to assist in beating off the German destroyers' determined torpedo attack, and it was then that we opened fire for the first time. This attack was probably the finest spectacular display that we saw in the whole action; the destroyers were at times completely hidden by the splashes caused by the secondary armaments of the battle cruisers and battleships, as well as those of our own guns, and twice we saw one sink. The first seemed to disappear suddenly; the second stopped and sank slowly by the head, pouring out steam. These were the only two that we had time or opportunity to notice, but there must have been many others.

We rejoined the battle fleet after the attack was beaten off, and were in our station during the big circling movement made by our fleet. Much later, about 8.15 p.m., while we were on a southerly course, we proceeded with the *Constance* to attack some destroyers which appeared on our beam at extreme visibility (about 10,000 yards), but as quickly vanished again. We chased them, and shortly sighted the German battle fleet proceeding also on a southerly course. We turned on to a course parallel to them after closing to about 8,500 yards, to fire a torpedo. We were not fired at previous to our turning, possibly because they could not make us out as friend or enemy, but they proceeded to rectify their error as soon as we turned, and got our range quickly, straddling us before we got our submerged torpedo tube flooded.

Having fired our torpedo, we turned and proceeded full speed, zig-zagging 2 points each way on an easterly course to join our own ships, which were by this time out of sight.

We were in sight of the German battleships for perhaps 10 minutes, and under fire during this time from two *Kaiser* class battleships and one *Heligoland*, whose shooting was very accurate, and only our high speed and zigzagging saved us from annihilation. As it was, we seemed to be in the middle of splashes, and the noise of the bursting shell and flying fragments was absolutely deafening. We were hit five times in all, three of which did serious damage to personnel. One shell, bursting against the breech of the port after 4-inch gun, smashed the fittings and gun shield and killed practically all the gun's crew, the notable exception being the sight-



SIGNALMEN USING TEN-INCH  
ARC-LAMP.



## The 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron.

setter—a corporal of marines—who had the gun between him and the burst and only suffered a slight scalp wound.

The second hit on us burst near No. 3 4-inch gun under the bridge, disabled the gun, killing and wounding some of the crew, and fragments of this shell penetrated the deck of the lower bridge and wounded a signalman and a bugler.

The third shell penetrated the upper deck, and burst in the boys' mess deck, almost in the middle of the after dressing station, killing some and wounding many others, including the staff surgeon.

For the last five minutes that we were under fire we were in sight of our own ships, although the two battle fleets were invisible to each other, and we were told afterwards that at times we were hidden in spray from the splashes. Altogether, we had 10 killed and 23 wounded, some seriously. We were ordered to take station on the port beam of the battle fleet for the night, and in the morning resumed our cruising station ahead during the search for disabled enemy ships.

On reaching Scapa afterwards, we were ordered in first, instead of waiting for the battle fleet to enter, to land our wounded. Our dead we buried at sea the morning after the action, the Commodore leaving the bridge for a few minutes to read the burial service, the one time he was ever known to leave the bridge at sea.

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## The 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron.

*Extract from Vice-Admiral Commanding Battle Cruiser Force's report, quoted in Commander-in-Chief's despatch (para. 7):—*

*“From the report of Rear-Admiral T. D. W. Napier, M.V.O., the 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron, which had maintained its station on our bow well ahead of the enemy, at 6.25 p.m. attacked with the torpedo. “Falmouth” and “Yarmouth” both fired torpedoes at the leading enemy battle cruiser, and it is believed that one torpedo hit, as a heavy underwater explosion was observed. The 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron then gallantly attacked the heavy ships with gunfire, with impunity to themselves, thereby demonstrating that the fighting efficiency of the enemy had been seriously impaired. Rear-Admiral Napier deserves great credit for his determined and effective attack. “Indomitable” reports that about this time one of the “Derfflinger” class fell out of the enemy's line.”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Comparative strength of *Falmouth* class and *Derfflinger* class:—

	Type.	Size.	Broadside Guns.	Armour.	Speed.	Crew.
<i>Falmouth</i> or <i>Yarmouth</i>	Light Cruiser	5,250 tons	Five 6" i	About 4" armour	25 knots	400 men
<i>Derfflinger</i> or <i>Lutzow</i>	Battle Cruiser	26,000 tons	Eight 12" Twelve 5.9"	12" armour	28 knots	1125 men

Narrative from H.M.S. "*Falmouth*," Flagship of the 3rd L.C.S.

I must admit that I was extremely glad when we saw the leading ships of our battle fleet screen appear over the horizon, for from 5.0 to 6.0 p.m. our battle cruisers and the 5th B.S. were being engaged by the greater part of the German fleet. Once sighted, the approach of the battle fleet seemed rapid. The 4th Light Cruiser Squadron ahead of the battle ships raced through our line, and turned up on to our course, and the 1st Cruiser Squadron, *Defence*, etc., went right through and on towards the enemy, where they were lost. The 3rd L.C.S. became divided, *Yarmouth* only being left with *Falmouth*, but *Canterbury* joined us, and *Birkenhead* and *Gloucester* were near to us abreast the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron (*Invincible*, etc.). *Falmouth* was now leading the entire line.

Almost immediately after clearing the head of our battle fleet, we were ordered to attack detached enemy light cruisers, but for the moment we could not see any. However, we closed in to starboard towards the enemy, and at seven minutes past six opened fire on a light cruiser which had already been severely damaged by the 3rd B.C.S. This German light cruiser certainly put up a very plucky fight, for she was obviously sinking, one funnel was knocked away, and probably all her guns were out of action except her fore-castle gun, which was steadily firing. We fired on her till she dropped out of range astern. Then two other light cruisers appeared on our starboard bow, firing at our Scapa destroyers coming down from ahead, and we opened fire on them, setting one on fire, again probably only a smoke box, but they promptly retired.

The 3rd B.C.S. had now—it was about 6.15—turned up on our port quarter ahead of Admiral Beatty's four battle cruisers, and were engaging *Derfflinger* and *Lutzow*. *Derfflinger* was being splendidly hit, and there was a big explosion forward. She dropped astern, and it looked as though one of the foremost turrets was destroyed. *Lutzow* then led the German line, and at a range of between 5,000 and 6,000 yards *Falmouth* opened fire on her, apparently with some success, and also fired a torpedo. *Lutzow* was hit amidships by a torpedo, which may possibly have been from *Falmouth*, though it may have been fired by the gallant *Shark* before she sank.

After being fired on by *Falmouth* for several minutes, *Lutzow* directed her secondary battery on to us, and after two or three salvos gained a hit on *Falmouth's* fore-mast, which, though it only scored the mast and did not explode, cut the voice pipes from the fore-top, and a ricochet came in aft. As the position had now become unhealthy for a small ship, *Falmouth* drew off. Just about this time *Invincible* blew up on our port quarter. All the time that *Falmouth* had been in action with *Lutzow*, the head of our battle line had been working round towards the German fleet, their course altering from N.E. to east, on to S. 80° E., S.E. by S., south at 7 o'clock, then south-west, and at 8 o'clock west.



At 8 p.m. we were ordered to "sweep to the westward and locate head of enemy line before dark." At 8.8 we sighted, and until 8.38 engaged four light cruisers, but then some enemy battle cruisers arrived in support of the light cruisers, and we retired. This was our last action of the day. It is perhaps worthy of note that the enemy were firing shrapnel during this evening action.

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## Narrative of H.M.S. "Yarmouth," of the 3rd L.C.S.

In H.M.S. *Yarmouth* we had been close spectators of the loss of H.M.S. *Defence* at about 6.15 p.m., but very shortly afterwards we were able, in a slight measure, to revenge her loss.

The light cruiser which she and the other ships of the 1st C.S. had been engaging was left badly damaged, and *Falmouth* and *Yarmouth* now opened fire upon her to finish her off. At the same time, however, two German battle cruisers were observed approaching from the southward getting uncomfortably close, but just when they had opened fire upon us with a salvo of heavy stuff, which fell only just short, *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, and *Indomitable* arrived on the scene from the northward and engaged the enemy's attention. The German battle cruisers and our 3rd B.C.S. turned on to a parallel course, Admiral Hood, who led the squadron in the *Invincible*, being on our port quarter about 2,000 yards away, with the enemy only about 6,000 to 7,000 yards from us on our starboard bow. Also on our starboard bow was a cluster of five or six British destroyers carrying out a torpedo attack on the German battle cruisers, which were heavily firing on our destroyers with their secondary armament of 5.9-inch guns. We saw two of our T.B.D.'s put out of action and drop astern (? *Shark* and *Acasta*).

Then about three German light cruisers appeared in sight ahead of the German battle cruisers, and these we engaged at a range of 8,000 to 11,000 yards. At about 6.20 *Invincible* blew up.<sup>1</sup> Two officers and a few men were picked up by a destroyer, though no one who witnessed the explosion would have believed that anyone could have lived through it.

Meanwhile, we were under fire from the three enemy light cruisers, and also occasional 5.9 salvoes from the German battle cruisers were fired at us, besides a few 12-inch "shorts" meant for *Invincible*, which came close to our stern.

Hoping to close the enemy light cruisers, we drew ahead of *Inflexible* and *Indomitable*, but our opponents turned away to starboard, and we shifted our fire on to the leading German battle cruiser. She was a topping target, and it was very pleasant to see salvo after salvo of our 6-inch

<sup>1</sup> Actual time was 6.33.



hitting her, which must have considerably worried their bridge and personnel on the upper deck, and perhaps accounted for the poor reply which they made to our fire with their 5.9 guns.

We continued east-south-easterly till 6.45 p.m., then south-easterly till 7.0 p.m., when the speed of the fleet was reduced to 15 knots by general signal. At 7.5 p.m. *Birkenhead* and *Gloucester* rejoined us, and at the same time the 1st L.C.S. were coming up astern; course was altered to south-west. At 7.45 p.m. we were ordered to sweep to the westward to try to locate the head of the enemy's line, and were in the process of spreading south, at one mile intervals from *Falmouth*, when at 8.20 p.m. five enemy light cruisers were observed bearing north-north-west, steering about south-west. They were followed by two battle cruisers—presumably the two we lost sight of after 6.30—which were being engaged by our battle cruisers. We at once formed single line and engaged the light cruisers at about 7,000 yards' range. Their salvoes were all short, and ours may have been as bad, for it was impossible to spot now under the almost hopeless light conditions. The enemy drew off, and we never saw them again.

Throughout the action I personally was so busy conning the ship from the upper bridge and endeavouring to keep in my head an idea of the relative positions of squadrons, that I did not appreciate until afterwards the effect that the action had upon other officers and men. Our men were wildly excited at seeing the light cruiser, *Pillau* (? *Wiesbaden*), so hopelessly knocked out by our fire and the fire of Arbuthnot's squadron, and ammunition was sent up the hoists with so much enthusiasm and energy as to accumulate a dangerous amount at the top. As it happened, we were merely splashed by salvoes close to us, and heard much hissing of splinters over our head but were never hit, and so perhaps cannot talk much about action experience, although we had a good many close shaves. The men in the engine-room and stokeholds all thought that we had been hit several times, as the heavy shells falling short felt to them like a bump on the ship.

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### H.M.S. "Abdiel," Minelayer.

Extract from Lord Jellicoe's Book, "The Grand Fleet, 1914-16."<sup>1</sup>

"At 9.32 p.m. a signal was made to the Mine-laying Flotilla Leader, 'Abdiel' . . . to proceed to lay a mine-field in a defined area some 15 miles from Vyl Lightship,<sup>2</sup> over which it was expected the High Seas Fleet would

<sup>1</sup> Page 375. Cassell's Edition 1919. The extract is taken from this book instead of from the official despatch because the reference to *Abdiel's* operation in the despatch, probably in order to preserve secrecy, was confined to this:—"Abdiel, ably commanded by Commander Berwick Curtis, carried out her duties with the success which has always characterised her work."

<sup>2</sup> Vyl Lightship:—Position 55° 24' N., 7° 45' E., just south of Horn Reef off the Jutland coast, and about 72 miles north of Heligoland. See Map p. 152.

*pass if the ships attempted to regain their ports during the night via the Horn Reef. The 'Abdiel' carried out this operation unobserved in the same successful manner as numerous other similar operations have been undertaken by this most useful little vessel; from the evidence of one of our submarines, stationed near the Horn Reef, which reported on return to her base having heard several underwater explosions between 2.15 and 5.30 a.m. on June 1st, it was judged that some enemy ships had struck mines. . . ."*

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### Letter from H.M.S. "Abdiel."

*Abdiel* had no active part as far as fighting was concerned in the Battle of Jutland, and one cannot make a good yarn out of it. Up to the time of meeting the Germans we were working with the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, stationed 5 miles ahead of the Battle Fleet and steaming in line abreast, ships a mile apart. When the fleets sighted each other and the deployment signal was made, the 4th L.C.S. went off to their station ahead of the line; but *Abdiel* remained where she was until the fleet had nearly completed deploying, by which time the "overs" from the Germans, strafing two of our four-funnelled cruisers about half a mile south-west of us and the three battle cruisers led by *Invincible* about half a mile to the south-east of us, came buzzing about and bursting round us. I, therefore, legged it round the head of our battle line, which had finished deploying, and managed to get through four lines of destroyers taking up their position ahead of the fleet, and finally got to my battle position half a mile or so on the disengaged beam of the *Iron Duke*. Here we remained until dusk.

At about 9.30 p.m. I got orders to proceed to a position south of Vyl Lightship and lay a line of mines. We therefore went off at 32 knots, passing on our way several ships in the distance, and also a flotilla of sorts which were making a great deal of smoke, but as we were not making any smoke ourselves, we presumably were not seen. We reached our position about 1 a.m., and laid the mines, then returned to Rosyth for another load, passing south of the big North Sea mine area.

*Abdiel* was not hit during the battle, and did not have any action with any Hun destroyer or big ships, but we got a very good view of the whole show between 6 and 8 p.m. We had 80 ordinary mines and 10 Leon mines on board, all primed, so perhaps it is just as well that we weren't hit.

The ship did exactly what she was intended to do, justified her existence, and that's all there is to it.



## Letter from a Submarine Officer

On Patrol off Horn's Reef Light Vessel in the Vicinity of the Scene of the Battle  
during 31st May and 1st June.

*The following letter from a Submarine Officer will indicate the difficulty of submarines sharing in a fleet action. No British submarines took part in the battle, and it is believed also that no German submarines were present, although at the time several reports of submarines were made.*

I am afraid that one cannot say much about our experiences during the Battle of Jutland, as none of us knew anything about Jutland until our return to harbour four or five days after. During the 30th May my boat, and either two or three other submarines, received orders to proceed to sea that evening to take part in an operation in the vicinity of the Vyl Light Vessel on the night of 1st June. Late that afternoon, 30th May, a "flap" started, and the remainder of the submarine flotilla were ordered to sea, but our party were ordered still to carry out the original operation, as it was not known what the flap was about.

We proceeded to sea about 8 p.m., and a very careful look-out was kept, and W/T masts kept up longer than usual, as I personally thought it might be another Yarmouth raid on. However, we had a very uneventful trip, and neither saw nor heard anything.

About 11.30 p.m. on 31st May we should have made the Horn's Reef Light Vessel, but failing to do so, I decided we must be to the westward, and altered course to the eastward, and later to the southward. Just as we picked up the light at midnight, the look-out, pointing vertically overhead, sang out, "Do you think that is a Zeppelin, sir?" I looked up and saw a man put his head out of the car of a Zepp., so I blew the hooter and dived to the bottom. As we were settling down on the bottom after adjusting the trim of the boat, there was a very loud noise, as if an explosive sweep was being towed up astern of us. I noticed on glancing round from the diving gauge in the direction from which the noise was coming that one of the crew had his hand on the very spot where I had mentally decided it would strike us, and I wondered if we should hear the clang of the impact before the explosion. However, it passed away forward without contact.

Shortly afterwards the crew fell out from diving stations, and a little later loud explosions were heard at intervals, apparently all round us as if the vicinity was being depth-charged. However, I decided not to shift, as I considered it just as likely we might get one while shifting as by remaining where we were; also, it was of the utmost importance to save the battery, as the following night we had orders to be on the bottom out of the way of our own surface craft, and to come up at dawn and to keep



diving patrol and attack any enemy vessels which might have been enticed out. It was, therefore, important that we should start operations with the battery as fully charged as possible, and at the same time not give our position away by being on the surface charging longer than was absolutely necessary during daylight. With this in view, and having ample time in which to reach our billet, we remained on the bottom until next morning when the tide being favourable we rose and proceeded to our billet diving at periscope depth. Shortly after rising a destroyer was sighted, but she turned away before we could identify her or get within range. During that day and the next we sighted several hostile submarines homeward bound, but only succeeded in getting within range of one, who turned away immediately after the torpedo was fired. We completed our time on patrol and returned to Harwich without further incident.

Sorry I can't tell you anything more, but that is all that there is, and, as I said previously, we knew nothing of Jutland until our return to harbour. When the torpedo lieutenant of the depot ship greeted us with the news and asked how many ships we had got, we thought that he was pulling our legs.

### Narrative of H.M.S. "Onslow."

*(H.M.S. "Onslow" was detached from the 13th Flotilla in the early afternoon of 31st May to work with H.M.S. "Engadine," Seaplane Carrier of the Rosyth Force. About 5.0 p.m. "Onslow" rejoined the 13th Flotilla which was then steaming to the north with Sir David Beatty's battle cruisers.)*

*Extract from Commander-in-Chief's despatch :—"Onslow" was possibly the destroyer referred to by Rear-Admiral commanding 3rd L.C.S. as follows :—*

*"Here I should like to bring to your notice the action of a destroyer (name 'unknown . . .') which we passed close in a disabled condition soon after 6.0 p.m. She apparently was able to struggle ahead again and made straight 'for the 'Derfflinger' [battle cruiser] to attack her. The incident appeared so 'courageous that it seems desirable to investigate it further. . . .'"*

. . . At 5.45 p.m. the Grand Fleet cruisers were sighted on our port bow, and a very welcome sight they were, I can assure you, for knowing that the Germans had their entire battle fleet out in support, this recent run to the northward had been rather an anxious journey.

At 5.50 p.m. we sighted the first battle squadron, and *Lion* immediately started to close the enemy, turning to the eastward, and rapidly reduced the range. The German battle cruisers also made a big turn to the east, and a little later to a course about S.E. Just as our battle cruisers were conforming to this last alteration, we sighted a broken-down enemy light

cruiser only about 6,000 yards from the *Lion*, in a position to fire torpedoes at our battle cruiser line. We were suitably placed on the engaged bow of the *Lion* for repelling such an attack, and at once went off to try and stop this firing of torpedoes, and at a range of 4,000 to 2,000 yards, or less, engaged the light cruiser, firing 58 rounds of which I am sure a number must have hit. At one time we came so close that, with a range of only 1,900 yards on the gun sights, our shots were still not falling short. The enemy cruiser replied vigorously, but with little success. Her firing was very much easier to endure than the firing which we had suffered an hour previously, when we had simply to sit still under a heavy "bombardment" unable to make any reply. I should not say perhaps that this cruiser's fire exercised *no* strain upon us, for one man of my gun's crew, for example, was found sheltering behind a flimsy bit of canvas, apparently acting on an extension of the ostrich principle that, if he was out of sight of the enemy, their shell could not hit him! But his nervousness had its use, for when shown what a fool he was the men laughed at him, and it served to steady the gun's crew, who went on firing the whole time just as coolly as if they were at target practice.

We now saw that the enemy battle cruisers had made another turn, so that we were now brought 45 degrees on their port bow at only about 11,000 yards from them—an ideal position for a torpedo attack—so the Captain closed the enemy, and when 8,000 yards from the leading enemy battle cruiser gave the signal to the torpedo tubes to fire, and turned the ship to port to bring the sights on. Unfortunately just at this moment the ship was struck amidships by a heavy shell, and was enveloped in clouds of escaping steam. In the confusion only one of our four torpedoes was fired, although the Captain understood that all four torpedoes had gone. He sent the sub-lieutenant aft to the tubes to find out exactly what had happened, and this officer, finding out at the tubes that there were still three torpedoes left, and sighting at the same moment our old friend the German light cruiser, now a couple of miles away on our beam, himself aimed and fired a torpedo at her. This torpedo hit the light cruiser below the conning tower and exploded. The Sub. then returned to the bridge and reported the fact that we still had two torpedoes left. The Captain then abandoned his intention of creeping out of range of the enemy before being hopelessly crippled, and decided to go in again and make use of the two remaining torpedoes by delivering a final attack on the enemy's line of battle, which at this time was re-appearing out of the mist about 8,000 yards away.

The sub-lieutenant was sent aft again to supervise the firing of the torpedoes, and soon after coming under fire again we fired the two torpedoes, noticing that they started their run satisfactorily and more than probably crossed the enemy battle line, although it was impossible to follow their track by eye very far.



About this time I noticed some black smoke coming up from the ship's side abreast of the mainmast, and thinking that there might be a small fire there, I sent down my messenger to investigate. Presently he came back grinning from ear to ear to tell me, "Your cabin has gone, sir," which subsequent investigation proved to be quite correct. A shell after passing through three or four bulkheads, not to mention the ward-room gramophone, had selected my cabin as a suitable place in which to burst, and had, almost literally, removed the whole place, with every imaginable possession of mine that had been there. The deck above and below also was torn away, and nearly the whole of the ship's side had disappeared. The Captain's cabin, the ward-room, the cabin flat, etc., all presented a sorry appearance, being entirely wrecked and inches deep in a messy mixture of oil fuel and salt water.

Meanwhile the Captain had, as he put it in his official report, "retired at greatly reduced speed . . . proceeding to close H.M.S. *Champion*, "with the idea of rejoining the 13th Flotilla," but owing to two shells exploding in No. 2 boiler-room, the ship gradually lost speed, and then stopped whilst we were still some way short of the battle line. Just before this we observed near us one of our battleships stopped and surrounded with water spouts, apparently about to be sunk although she was replying to the enemy's fire with all her guns—an inspiring sight. We afterwards discovered that it was the *Warspite* doing her famous stunt at "Windy Corner." Two of her officers afterwards told us that we in the *Onslow* presented an equally remarkable appearance, roaming about all alone between the battle lines belching forth vast clouds of steam, and we were given credit in some quarters for having put up a smoke screen in front of the *Warspite*. But this we did not do deliberately, as the *Warspite* was firing so lustily herself that we thought she might not like it.

The Engineer Officer now arrived on the bridge to report that he could only steam for a few more minutes, as the main feed tank was holed and all the water in the reserve feed tanks was used up. Hardly had he spoken when we gradually lost headway and lay stopped, still within range of the enemy.

We tried to stop up the holes in the ship's side with our collision mats, but this proved to be rather a ludicrous proceeding as the holes were larger than the mats. We also got ready for'ard to be taken in tow, in the hopes of some other ship turning up to tow us.

The battle was now surging away from us, and, to our surprise, the *Warspite* also seemed to have come to life again and disappeared to the south-east.

I remember as the battle lines receded how remarkable was the calm in contrast to the continuous noise of gunfire, the shriek of shells passing overhead, and the roar of steam escaping from our engine-room, which had deafened us for the last half-hour. Now that every engine in the ship was stopped and the two battle fleets were out of sight, the sudden stillness was very weird, even though we could still hear the



gunfire of the battle closer than we quite liked. It seemed like having fallen off the top of a noisy, rumbling motor 'bus and being left lying in the road in a reactionary calm, too injured to move, but wondering all the time when another 'bus was coming along to finish us off.

. . . . .

A quarter of an hour after our engines stopped, at 7.15 p.m., the *Defender* came in sight, closed us, and asked if she could be of any assistance. She also was a lame duck, having been reduced to a speed of 10 knots by a 12-inch shell ricochetting into her foremost boiler-room, so, as she was of no further fighting use for that day, our Captain accepted her offer, and she proceeded to take us in tow.

There then started the long journey home of two lame-duck destroyers, which Rudyard Kipling has written of under the title, "The Cripple and the Paralytic." I am not able to compete with Rudyard Kipling as a descriptive author, and anyhow there is really not much to be said about it except that it was a somewhat uncertain and distinctly uncomfortable voyage. The taking in tow was enlivened by a few large splashes arriving near us, I don't know where from, and by the apparent probability of the general action returning to our neighbourhood at any moment. The Captain directed *Defender* to shape course west by north as soon as we were in tow, and just as dusk was falling we left the scene of our adventures at rather less than 6 knots' speed, still hearing occasional bursts of firing to the southward. I must mention here that, in spite of the heavy damage to the ship, our casualties were only three men killed, which was really an astonishingly light number considering all the damage we had received. Two of these three men we buried next morning, according to the custom of the sea.

About 9 p.m. we had a mild scare, the after look-outs reporting a large ship overhauling us, but to our relief it proved to be the *Warspite*, which signalled to us, "Take station astern; speed 16 knots," and then rapidly disappeared on the port bow. We were not 16 knotters.

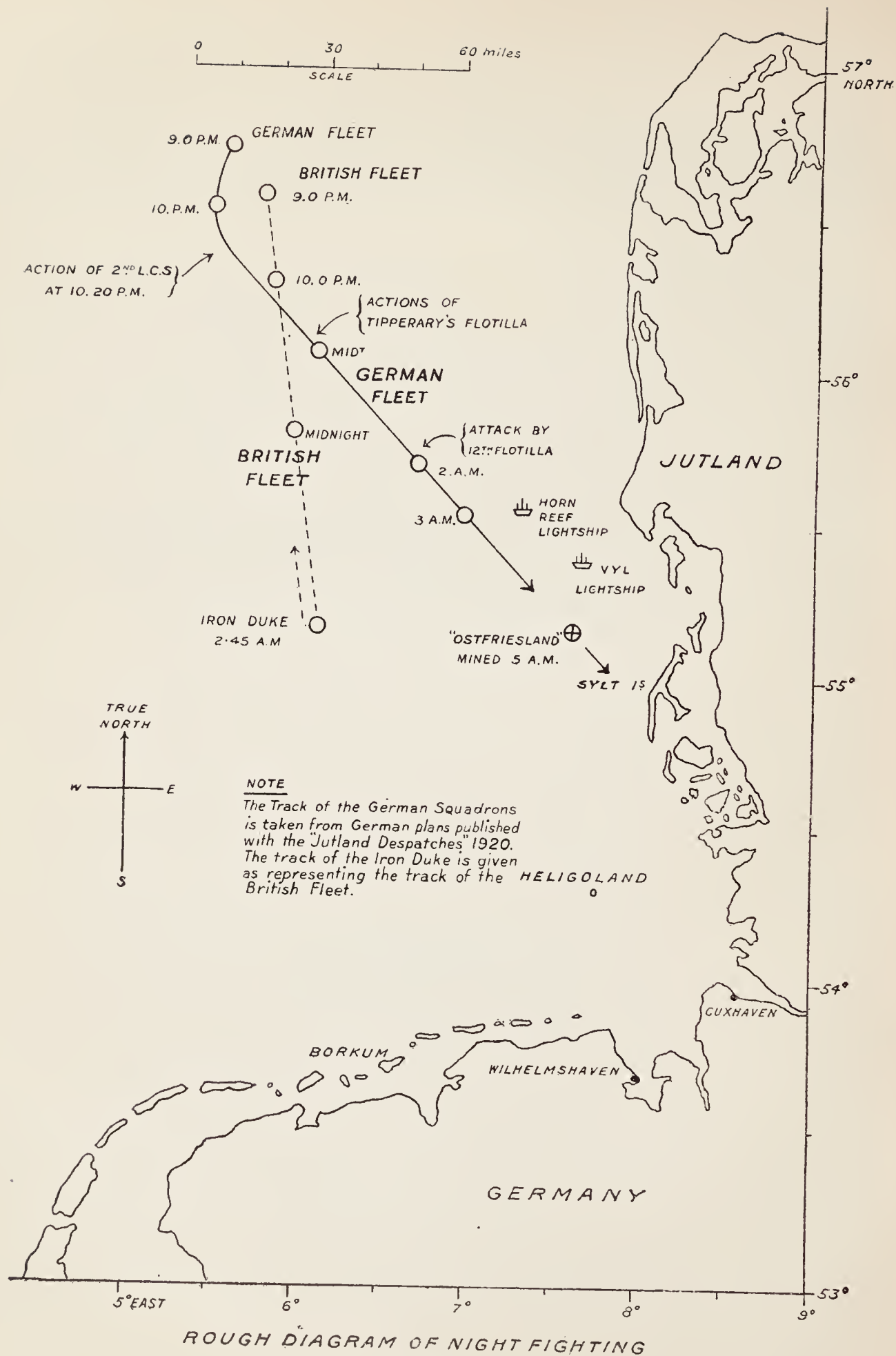
A fresh sou'westerly breeze was now gaining force every hour and the barometer was falling fast. Three times the tow parted, and eventually we found that the only tow that was proof against the continual jerks of the two ships plunging in the short, steep sea, was a span composed almost entirely of chain cable. But after a time the Engineer Officer raised enough steam in the boilers, by using salt water, to enable the steering engine to be worked, and this was a great assistance in preventing the ship from yawing violently from side to side as she had been doing. Most of the hands at this time were employed in transferring oil fuel from one tank to another in any little pot or pan that could be collected—the only means left of getting the fuel to the boilers, as the pipe system was out of order, and only the for'ard tank had any oil left in it. We were still able to receive W/T signals, although we could not send any,

and we intercepted one signal from *Champion* giving directions for a division of 13th Flotilla to search for *Onslow*, but neither ourselves nor *Defender* (which was able to signal) could tell *Champion* where we were, as we did not know ourselves, and, our sextants all being smashed up, we could not find out.

We continued towards Aberdeen during the 1st June, but that evening intercepted a signal reporting a division of enemy destroyers steering a course and speed which apparently would take them right past our position. However, we had all our guns still intact and plenty of ammunition left, and made arrangements with *Defender* that we would occupy the Huns if we met them whilst she tried to make good her escape. But our anxiety over this was unnecessary, as some days later we heard that the scare was a false one, the division of destroyers being a British one wrongly reported as Germans.

In spite of the wind continuing to freshen, the tow held throughout the night of 1st June without further trouble, and on Friday, June 2nd, we got under the lee of Scotland, and at 1 p.m. that day were met by tugs off Aberdeen and taken safely into harbour. There we remained being repaired for the next two months.





ROUGH DIAGRAM OF NIGHT FIGHTING



## *Phase III.*



# NIGHT ACTION



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### PHASE III.

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## Night Action.

*During the night of 31st May to 1st June, 1916, there were few men in the British fleet—or probably in the German fleet either—who had a clear conception of what was happening around them. It was almost impossible that they should do so in the darkness and jumble of the night fighting. But now, five years after the event, it is not very difficult to analyse the several engagements and obtain a clear idea of the general course of the fighting.*

*At the close of the day action on the 31st May the German fleet was some 15 to 20 miles to the westward of the British fleet—that is, the British fleet was between the German fleet and Germany. It was understood that there were two paths by which the German fleet could return to their bases; one, by making the Horn Reef Light Vessel and then proceeding down a swept channel close to the coast of Schleswig-Holstein to Cuxhaven; the other, by proceeding direct towards Heligoland.*

*At 9 p.m., the British battle fleet disposed in four divisions, with the battle cruiser fleet and cruiser squadrons stationed on the flank of the battle squadrons, shaped course south. In rear of the battle squadrons were stationed the destroyer flotillas of the fleet, and also one light cruiser squadron, the 2nd L.C.S. (Note that they were in rear of the battle squadrons.)*

*The German fleet chose the Horn Reef route for their passage home, and steered roughly on a south-easterly course to make the Horn Reef Light Vessel.<sup>1</sup> They were apparently in three divisions following each other; pre-Dreadnought battleships accompanied by light craft leading, the fleet flagship and two Dreadnought squadrons following, with the latest built Dreadnoughts and the battle cruisers in the rear. On this south-easterly course the German squadrons ran into the British destroyer flotillas astern of the battle fleet, and from soon after 9 p.m. on 31st May until 2 a.m. the following morning, these German squadrons fought intermittently with British destroyers and light cruisers as they crossed their path. In this simple fact of the Germans on their homeward course crossing the British light forces steering to the southward in rear of the British battle fleet, lies nearly all the explanation of the “strategy” of the night fighting at Jutland that the ordinary person requires to know.*

*Our destroyer flotillas were not detached to seek out the German fleet, but were in such a geographical position that the German fleet en route for*

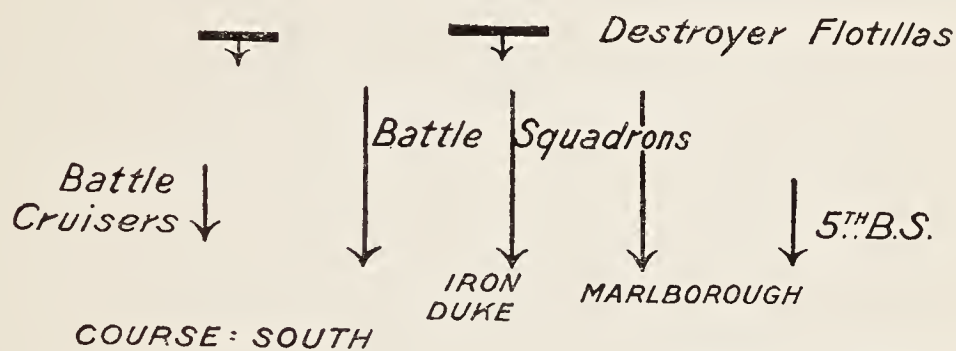
<sup>1</sup> The *Abdiel*, mine-layer, at 9.32 p.m., was ordered to lay a minefield near to the Horn Reef Light Vessel. See *Abdiel's* narrative on page 145.

## Night Action.

*Horn Reef* came into contact with them. The German fleet did not meet any of our big ships, but the night fighting lay wholly between our light craft and the German line crossing astern, to the northward, of our battle fleet. Our big ships did not come into action at all although they constantly saw astern of them the gun-flashes, searchlights, and explosions of the destroyer flotillas in action.

The positions of the several fights are difficult to place exactly without first very carefully analysing all possible records, but, as one fight had little influence on another, this is of small importance to us. It is really sufficient to know that there were three main night actions. The action of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron at about 10.20 p.m. ; the actions of "Tipperary's" flotilla from about 11.30 p.m. onwards ; and the attack on a German battle squadron by the 12th Destroyer Flotilla at daybreak on June 1st.

Under a third heading, "Other Incidents of the Night," to include two small actions by H.M.S. "Castor," in company with the 11th Flotilla, at 10 p.m. and at 12.15 a.m., and an action by the 13th Flotilla in which H.M.S. "Turbulent" was lost, can really be grouped all the remaining actions of the night. There were no other squadron actions.



## NIGHT DISPOSITIONS.

But more interesting for the reader to appreciate than the cause of the fighting is the conditions of that fighting, the atmosphere of it as experienced by the British flotillas and light cruisers. The uncertainty, the continuous strain of looking-out, the anxiety to know if a ship is friend or foe, the responsibility of opening fire, the completely blinding effect of light in one's eyes after long darkness ; all these must be experienced to be fully appreciated, though they can be guessed at by anyone who pictures the inevitable difficulties and the strain of fighting in pitch darkness. The night fighting that did take place, although it resulted almost entirely from the accidental passage of the German fleet through the rear of the British fleet, and although it had no governing influence on the result of the battle, probably comprised the most intensive fighting, and makes the most interesting telling of all that occurred at Jutland. The following narratives tell of the fighting, of the atmosphere of it, and the adventures of those who fought.



## Chapter XI.



### LIGHT CRUISER ACTION ABOUT 10.20 P.M.



#### Narratives from

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## CHAPTER XI.

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### LIGHT CRUISER ACTION ABOUT 10.20 P.M.

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#### Narrative of the Navigating Officer of H.M.S. "Nottingham,"

Which was 3rd Ship in the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron Line during the  
Night Action at about 10.20 p.m.

At 9.15, whilst it was still just twilight, we had a short action with German destroyers, of which the *Southampton* later claimed to have sunk one; but they disappeared in the mist and failing light before we could come to decisive range. Firing was still going on ahead of us, but no enemy ships were in sight, and for a while we had time to think of food and such things. Personally, I had been on the bridge since 2 p.m. with no extra clothing on, and I don't think that I had ever felt so cold before, but one cannot send people down to one's cabin to fetch overcoats in the middle of the Battle of Jutland. It was a relief now to get into a greatcoat and to sit down on the bridge for a few minutes and munch a sandwich.

About 9.50, when we were steaming south, heavy firing and gun-flashes could be heard and seen on the starboard bow, which we learnt afterwards was the German battle cruisers fighting our destroyers which they met in the darkness, but we did not know what it was at the time.

All was quiet for a time, and we kept undisturbed on our course until someone on the bridge sighted a ship on our starboard beam, which was obviously a three-funnel German cruiser of the distinctive *Stettin* class. She was not more than 2 miles away, silhouetted against the evening sky, and so was lit up to some extent while we remained in darkness, but the gun-layers had some difficulty in picking her up from the level of the deck, although from the bridge we could see her clearly. It was not until she made a challenge of coloured lights at us that our first gun was got off, but it acted as a very good reply to her challenge and scored a direct hit.

There then followed some ten minutes of such incessant firing, blinding flashes of guns, waving of searchlights, and constant alterations of course, that I had my work cut out to keep the ship in station astern of *Southampton* and *Dublin*, and I am afraid I cannot really do justice to any description of what happened, but it was a remarkable experience. As we fired our first gun, fully a dozen searchlights were switched on to our line from the ship we had first sighted and from others with her, and immediately

some sixty odd guns opened fire. Both ourselves and the enemy—we assumed afterwards that there were five enemy light cruisers—were firing with remarkable rapidity, and the noise became terrific, whilst every time that our foc'sle gun fired we on the bridge were almost blinded by its flash.

The range can have been little over 2,000 yards, which is almost point-blank range for 6-inch guns, and moreover, it was obvious that we and the enemy were on greatly converging courses, so I asked the Captain if we should alter away a little, and he told me to do so.

After two minutes of action the *Southampton* was badly on fire abreast her funnels, which lit the whole ship up, making her a most excellent target for the enemy. The *Dublin*, our next ahead, altered 8 points away almost at once, and we did not see her again, and the *Birmingham*, astern of us, also turned away. We thought that the *Southampton* with so many searchlights on her and badly on fire must in a minute be sunk, as she was such a conspicuous target. Coming third in the line, we did not receive the same attention from the enemy as did the *Southampton* and *Dublin*, and although searchlights were switched on to us and shells whistled all round, we were not hit. I think the fact that we were burning no searchlights saved us.

Then suddenly, almost as suddenly as the action had commenced, and quite inexplicably, the Germans switched off all their searchlights and vanished into the night, and the action was over. Why they did so, when *Southampton* was being so heavily hit, we could not understand, but we have always hoped that it was because we hit them well with our gunfire, and we hope that one ship was sunk by a torpedo fired from *Southampton*. The *Southampton*, Commodore Goodenough's flagship, soon got her fire under control, and we closed up upon her and for the rest of the night continued steaming to the southward unmolested and unmolesting.

. . . . .

At 2 a.m. we were well to the southward, near to the Heligoland Bight mine-fields, and altered round to a northerly course until 9 a.m., when we swept up and down in the hopes of regaining touch with the enemy, but without success, and at 10 a.m. we shaped course for Rosyth. I now had time to read through the signals, which yesterday had come through at the rate of about three a minute, and could endeavour to make some review of the battle we had fought. We could feel pretty satisfied with the individual part which *Nottingham* had played, and although it was not very cheering to think over the ships and men that we knew we had lost (particularly the men of our own squadron), we knew that at least we "held the ring" at the end of the action, and that the Germans must surely have suffered heavily if they would not renew the action at daylight. At any rate, thinking over in cold blood all the enemy's salvoes which, by the grace of God, we had successfully dodged, we felt pretty thankful that we were still alive.



## Narrative of the Torpedo-Lieutenant of H.M.S. "Southampton."

(Flagship of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron).

At dusk the Grand Fleet took up their night cruising stations, the 5th B.S. being stationed astern of the other battle squadrons, and the 2nd L.C.S. were astern of them.

In the *Southampton* we went to night action stations, and the word was passed round for the starboard guns' crews to be in immediate readiness for action on that side, whilst the port crews lay down to rest alongside their guns ready to take over the watch at midnight.

In this manner we proceeded quietly south for about an hour. At about 9.0 o'clock a brief action took place on our starboard beam, but it was impossible to see who was engaged, although several destroyers steaming at high speed were visible in the beams of searchlights. The firing was very heavy for a few minutes, then ceased as suddenly as it began.

Soon afterwards something appeared on our starboard bow, and closing rapidly turned out to be a number of destroyers. Fortunately we did not open fire, as they proved to be friendly, and they turned up on a parallel course and were soon lost to sight ahead.

The gathering on the *Southampton's* upper bridge was now considerable, including the Commodore, with his flag lieutenant and his secretary, the Commander, Navigator, Gunnery lieutenant, Torpedo lieutenant, and some ten ratings forming the range-finder crew, messengers and men tending the gunnery and torpedo communications, etc. In addition to this, on the lower bridge were two sub-lieutenants, the majority of the signal ratings, and two searchlights' crews. We always steered from the lower conning tower when at action stations, the Navigator conning the ship by voice pipe from the upper bridge, which, as events turned out, was fortunate, as the conning tower armour saved the steering gear from being wrecked.

At about 10.15 there appeared on our starboard beam, scarcely 1,500 yards distant, a line of five ships steering in the same direction as ourselves. We inspected them carefully from the bridge, and the officers in the after control position also observed and reported their presence to us.

The next few minutes were full of suspense, the newcomers being as unwilling to disclose their identity as were we; meanwhile cautionary orders were passed to the guns and searchlights, and I gave orders to flood the starboard torpedo tube ready for firing. Then the two squadrons almost simultaneously decided that the other was hostile and opened a violent fire.

Each of the five German ships switched on two groups of lights and opened fire, at least three ships very speedily concentrating on *Southampton*, which, with her searchlights burning, made an excellent target, the others finding and engaging the *Dublin*, our next astern. Neither *Nottingham*

nor *Birmingham* showed any lights, with the result that they remained undiscovered and were enabled to pour in a heavy fire on the enemy at almost point-blank range.

The next few minutes can only be described from a purely personal point of view, and my impressions are naturally confined to events in my immediate vicinity. Down at the guns the conditions were infinitely worse than on the bridge, where we were comparatively sheltered by the splinter mats rigged round the bridge rails. On the bridge the full glare of the searchlights of the leading enemy ship was on us, and we could see nothing, but I had already received enough impression of the general direction of advance of the enemy for the purpose of torpedo fire, so I passed down an order to the torpedo flat and waited impatiently for a reply. When it came through—the report “ready”—I fired at a group of hostile searchlights, which were the only things visible.

The Commodore came over to my side of the bridge and asked me if I had fired. I told him I had, and that the tube's crew were reloading. There was nothing for me to do at the moment, and I began to look round. It was impossible to distinguish the firing of our own guns from the noise of bursting shells; I remember a continuous screaming noise, apparently caused by “overs,” but I could see nothing of the results of our own firing owing to the glare of searchlights. I received no definite impression of the ship being struck by shell, only of a confused uproar. I did not find out the true state of affairs on deck until it was all over. I observed that a fire had started on board somewhere aft, which was soon hidden by another which shot up just abaft the bridge nearly to the fore-top. Our firing and the enemy's too now became desultory, and there were brief periods of calm, when there was little else to do but watch the fire, which was within a few feet of the after bridge screens, and, having seen three ships blow up earlier in the day, I wondered how long it would be before we should make the fourth, and what it would feel like. It was hot on the bridge, like standing in front of a boiler with the furnace door open. The doctor, who was down below, told me afterwards that his chief anxiety at this moment was to know whether the deck would split and let him through, or whether he would have to open it with his head when the ship went up.

But the enemy had apparently been hit as much as we had, and were glad of any pretext for breaking off the action, and just as we had made up our minds that another few minutes would surely see the end of the *Southampton*, the searchlights from the leading enemy ship suddenly went out, and she sheered off to starboard. She had been torpedoed and was sinking, though we did not know it at the time. The remainder of the Germans followed the motions of their leader, switched off their lights, and disappeared to the westward.

Gradually we collected ourselves and our squadron together, and began to take stock of the situation. The whole action had in reality



lasted no more than four minutes, though it seemed very much longer, but in that time our casualties had been very severe, 35 men killed or died of wounds, and 1 officer and 54 men wounded, and our broadside had been reduced from five 6-inch guns to two.

On the upper bridge the range-taker had been killed and another seaman badly wounded by a splinter, but, considering the number of people up there, we were surprisingly lucky. On the lower bridge three were killed and several wounded.

The real havoc was along the upper deck amongst the gun's crews, and in the passages where the ammunition supply parties were stationed. The three midship guns' crews in the starboard battery had been wiped out. The casualties of these three guns were 11 killed and 16 wounded, 27 out of a total of 33. The guns of the disengaged side were not much better off, losing 6 killed and 14 wounded out of a similar total of 33.

The forecastle and quarter-deck guns were untouched, but nearly all the voice pipes had been destroyed, and communication with the control had ceased soon after the action started. The casualties of the searchlights were severe, all the crew of the after pair of lights being killed, a direct hit on one searchlight removing it bodily, and the other light was completely wrecked. The funnel, masts, and protective mattresses round the bridge and control positions were riddled with splinters, and there were 10 direct hits on the ship's side, but only 3 of these were anywhere near the water-line and though they caused considerable damage inboard, there was never any danger to the stability of the ship.

After the action the medical staff were sadly busy. Divided into two parties at opposite ends of the central passage along the main deck, they worked throughout the night under the most appalling conditions. The dressing station was an ill-ventilated bathroom situated just over the boiler-rooms, measuring perhaps 8 feet square and hardly 6 feet high. An operating table was in the middle, and the deck as well as the passage outside was a litter of mangled men laid out in rows by the first-aid parties. Add to this a foul atmosphere thick with chloroform, and the painfully depressing sight of numbers of badly wounded men waiting their turn for attention, and the rest may be left to the imagination.

As each case was passed through the doctor's hands and his wounds were dressed he was removed to the ward-room, though this soon became overcrowded, and all officers' cabins were requisitioned. Several cabins were wrecked, and there was a good deal of water about dripping through from the deck above, where fire mains were burst and water was lying or flowing about. This did not add to the comfort of the wounded, but the holes were soon effectively stopped, and by the morning everyone had been made as comfortable as possible.

On deck there was an immense amount of work to be done in clearing away wreckage, organising and extemporising communications, etc.



Guns' crews were made up as far as possible from stokers and anyone else available, but we were really in no condition to fight another action, and we earnestly hoped to be left alone until daylight at least.

The Commander and the Gunnery lieutenant went round doing what they could, and eventually reduced the chaos to something like order. I remained on the bridge in case of another attack, the torpedo armament being undamaged.

At 11.30 p.m. there was heavy firing with searchlights burning some 5 miles astern, which lasted a few minutes, but then there was silence again. Some time later there was firing again in the same direction, which left us wondering who was fighting, but hoping sincerely that, whoever it was, he would keep his action to himself.

Late in the night we increased to 20 knots, and at daybreak we were close to the 5th B.S. The dawn was misty, visibility not more than 7,000 yards, and about 5.0 a.m. we passed through the whole British fleet. Squadrons were being reformed and re-stationed, and we joined the battle cruisers, which we had not seen since the 16-point turn early in the action of the previous day. The day passed slowly without incident. We cruised south as far as the enemy mine-field, then back through the area covered the day before, but saw nothing except the bows of a destroyer floating vertically, and close to this an enormous patch of oil.

By the evening there was nothing to be gained by remaining in these waters, and we started for our base. During the night the wind freshened, and we had a little trouble with some of the shores and plugs over the holes in the side, so we eased down to make good the damage, but not before a certain amount of water had come into the ward-room, which caused some distress to the wounded.

Owing to this reduction of speed, we did not reach the Firth of Forth until some hours after the rest of the fleet, but it was most cheering to receive such a warm welcome—the battle cruisers cheered us as we passed, which we felt tremendously—and after evacuating our wounded we proceeded into the dockyard for repairs.

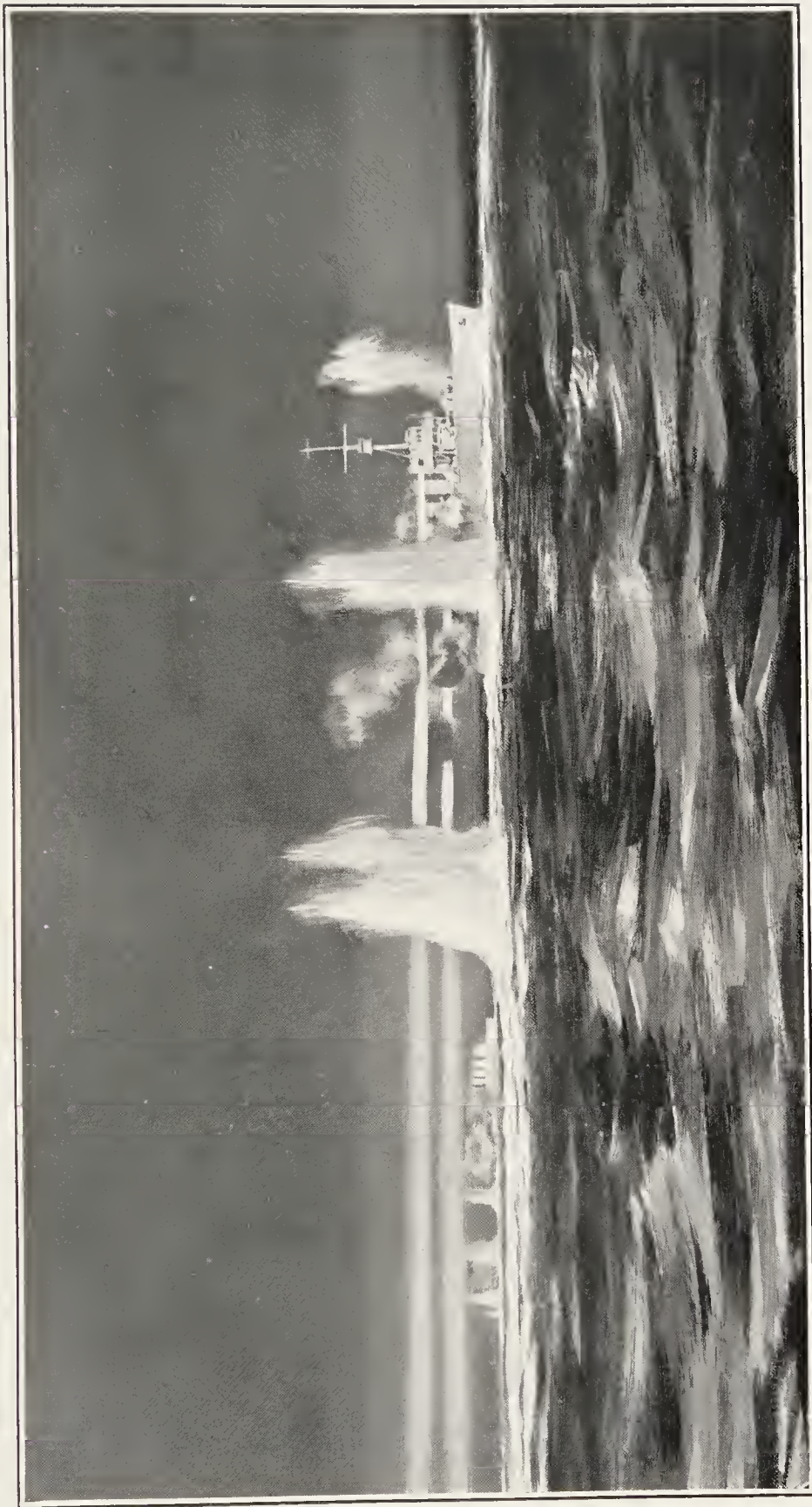
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### Extract from "A Naval Lieutenant, 1914-1918."

By "ETIENNE," an Officer of H.M.S. "Southampton."<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after 10 p.m. I groped my way on to the bridge and had a chat with B., the Gunnery Lieutenant, as a result of which he arranged that, in the event of night action, he would control the guns from the fore-bridge, and I would be in general charge aft. A moment later a signalman and R.I., the navigator, suddenly whispered, "Five ships on the beam."

<sup>1</sup> By kind permission of the author and of the publishers, Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd.



2ND L.C.S. IN ACTION WITH ENEMY LIGHT CRUISERS AT 10.15 P.M.

*From a Painting.*

*[To face page 162.]*





The Commodore looked at them through night glasses, and I heard a whispered discussion going on as to whether they were the enemy or the 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron. From their faint silhouettes it was impossible to discover more than the fact that they were light cruisers. I decided to go aft as quickly as possible. On the way aft I looked in at the after control, where H. B. said to me, "There are five Huns on the beam. What on earth is going on?"

They were evidently in as much doubt as us, for, as I got down into the waist by the mainmast, a very great many things happened in a very short time. We began to challenge; the Germans switched on coloured lights at their fore yardarms. A second later a solitary gun crashed forth from the *Dublin*, which was next astern of us. Simultaneously I saw the shell hit a ship just above the water-line and about 800 yards away. As I caught a nightmare-like glimpse of her interior, which has remained photographed on my mind to this day, I said to myself: "My G——, they are alongside us."

At that moment the Germans switched on their searchlights and we switched on ours. Before I was blinded by the lights in my eyes I caught sight of a line of light grey ships. Then the gun behind which I was standing answered my shout of "Fire!"

The action lasted  $3\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. The four leading German ships concentrated their lights and guns on the *Southampton*, the fifth, and perhaps the fourth as well, fired at the *Dublin*. The *Nottingham* and *Birmingham*, third and fourth in our line, with great wisdom did not switch on their lights, and were not fired at. In those  $3\frac{1}{2}$  minutes we had 89 casualties, and 75 per cent. of the personnel on the upper deck were killed or wounded. . . .

The range was amazingly close—no two groups of such ships have ever fought so close in the history of this war. There could be no missing. A gun was fired and a hit obtained; the gun was loaded, it flamed, it roared, it leapt to the rear, it slid to the front; there was another hit.

But to load guns there must be men, flesh and blood must lift the shells and cordite, and open and close the hungry breeches. But flesh and blood cannot stand high explosives, and there was a great deal of high explosive bursting all along H.M.S. *Southampton's* upper deck from her after screen to the fore-bridge.

The range was so close that the German shots went high, just high enough to burst on the upper deck and around the after superstructure and bridge. And in a light cruiser *that's* where all the flesh and blood has to stand.

So in a very few seconds my guns stopped firing, all through lack of flesh and blood—it was a great pity. In fact, the sergeant-major, with a burnt face, and myself seemed to be the only bits of flesh and blood left standing.

Where on earth were the others?

Why had the men on each side of me fallen down in such funny heaps? It was curious, very curious; as a matter of fact, daylight revealed that it wasn't so very remarkable. The really remarkable thing was that the sergeant-major, with his burnt face, and myself were still standing about and representing flesh and blood.

One shell burst on the side just below the gun, and the fragments had whipped over the top of the low bulwark and mowed the men down as standing corn falls before the reaper. Another shell burst on the searchlight just above us and hurled the remains of this expensive instrument many feet. Three men who looked after it and had guided its beam on to the enemy died instantaneously.

The fragments from this shell descended upon "the waist" like hail, and scoured out the insides of the gun-shields of the two 6-inch, manned by marines, one gun each side. And then I seemed to be standing in a fire. The flash of some exploding shell had ignited half-a-dozen rounds of cordite.

A shell exploding in the half-deck had severed the connection to the upper deck fire main. I put my head down a hatch and shouted for a good hose. The wine steward came up on deck with one, someone turned on the water down below, and the fire was quickly out. . . .

Then it became lighter than the day.

I looked forward.

Two pillars of white flame rose splendidly aloft. One roared up the fore-mast, the other reached above the tops of the second and third funnels. This then was the end! The heat warmed the cheek. It was bad luck, just after we had got the small fire aft extinguished. But there could be no doubt; the central ammunition hoist was between those two funnels.

What was it going to feel like to blow up?

Let me see—how had the *Queen Mary* looked?

Of course, we were a smaller ship, perhaps we would blow up in a gentler manner. Might as well take one's greatcoat off, just in case one fetched up in the water. I took it off.

What ought one to do?

Could not be more than a few seconds now. What could one do in a few seconds.

Could not fire a gun—no men.

Fascinating sight, those two pillars of white flame.

By heaven, the centre one had turned red, it wavered, it decreased in height; it grew again, but the spell was broken, and I rushed to the ladder which led from the waist to the boat deck in order to get up to the fire and assist. I ran a few steps and tripped up over a heap of bodies. I got up, tried not to tread on soft things, and arrived on the boat deck.

The firing had ceased, the Commander and H. B. were at the central fire. It suddenly went out, so did the foremost one.

Everything was pitch black.



Where were the Germans ?

Nothing but groans from dark corners. . . .

It is after the firing is over that the real horror of a night action begins. We did not know where the Germans were, our guns' crews were practically non-existent, the voice pipes and telephones to the guns were in shreds. We simply had to have time to reorganise, so we didn't dare show a light.

Yet the upper deck was strewn with dead and wounded. One stumbled on them as one walked. By the aid of discreetly struck matches and shaded torches the upper deck was searched. I heard a groan, and came upon a poor boy named Mellish. He could only say, "My leg—my arm." Another man and myself got him down one of the two steep hatches that led to the lower deck. His injuries were sickening, but with a smile he said : "It's no good worrying about me, sir," and then he died. I don't think he felt any pain.

I went up to the bridge to see B. about reorganising the men left for guns' crews and rigging up temporary communications. As I passed the chart-house a well-known voice called me in. It was the Commodore.

He told me to go down to the fleet surgeon and find out what our casualties were. And once more I went below.

I went down the foremost hatch and along the central passage—nick-named the twopenny tube—which in this class of ship runs down the centre of the ship above the boiler and engine-rooms. There was about 6 inches of water in this passage, which had slopped in from some holes almost exactly on the water-lines.

The operating-room—at the after end of this passage—was the stokers' bathroom. Imagine a small room which a shore-goer might hesitate to use as a dark room in his house, it might get so stuffy. The size of this room was about 8 feet high, 12 feet broad, and 12 feet long. The centre of the room was occupied by a light portable operating table. A row of wash basins ran down one side, and the steel walls streamed with sweat. Four bright electric lights were fixed to the roof, but with its faults the stokers' bathroom had some advantages. It had a tiled floor and a drain in the corner.

Stepping carefully between rows of shapes who were lying in lines down each side of the passage-way, I put my head inside the narrow doorway.

Bare-armed, the fleet surgeon and C., the young doctor, were working with desperate but methodical haste. They were just taking a man's leg off above the knee, so I did not interrupt. When they had finished and the patient had been carried out, I gave the P.M.O. the Commodore's message, whilst his assistants went outside to get another man.

"About 40 killed and 40 or 50 wounded," he said.

I thanked him, and went back to the bridge. . . .

I told the Commodore what I had learned. He made a remark. I realised we were only one light cruiser in a very big fleet.



I went aft again and down to the ward-room. The mess presented an extraordinary appearance. As it was the largest room in the ship, we placed all the seriously wounded cases in it. The long table was covered with men, all lying very still and silently white.

The young doctor was in charge, and as I came in he signalled to the sick-berth steward to remove one man over whom he had been bending. Four stokers, still grimy from the stokehold, lifted the body and carried it out.

Two men were on the top of the sideboard, others were in arm-chairs.

A hole in the side admitted water to the ward-room, which splashed about as the ship gently rolled. In this ankle-deep flood, blood-stained bandages and countless pieces of the small *débris* of war floated to and fro. All the wounded who could speak were very cheerful, and only wanted one thing—cigarettes. The most dreadful cases were the “burns”—but this subject cannot be written about.

An hour's work on deck connected with the reorganisation of the guns' crews, the impressment of stokers off watch for this duty, and the testing of communications followed. Then H. B. and myself decided we'd sit down somewhere. . . .

We had just lain down when fresh gun-firing broke out right astern, and everyone was on the *qui vive* with a jump. It died down—I wasn't sorry; we were not as ready for action as we could have wished.

We increased speed to 20 knots, and as dawn slowly grew the ghostly shapes of some battleships loomed out of the mist. I heard a pessimist on the upper bridge hazard the opinion that we were about to take station astern of the German battle fleet, but as the light grew brighter we saw that we had rejoined the British fleet.

Complete daylight enabled us to survey the damage.

The funnels were riddled through with hundreds of small holes, and the decks were slashed and ripped with splinters. There were several holes along the side, but the general effect was as if handfuls of splinters had been thrown against the upper works of the ship. The protective mattresses round the bridge and control position were slashed with splinters. The fore-mast, the rigging, the boats, the signal lockers, the funnel casing, the main mast—everything was a mass of splinter holes.

Our sailors firmly believed, and continued to do so up to the day on which I left the ship, that we had been deluged with shrapnel. It was certainly surprising that anyone on the upper deck remained unhit.



## Chapter XII.



### ADVENTURES OF "TIPPERARY'S" FLOTILLA.



Narratives from

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## CHAPTER XII.

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### The Adventures of "Tipperary's" Flotilla.

*The 4th Destroyer Flotilla, of which "Tipperary" was the leader and "Broke" the half-leader, was in the very heart of the night fighting at Jutland, and had perhaps, on this night, as many fighting adventures as has ever fallen to the lot of one small squadron of ships.<sup>1</sup>*

*Engaged at about 11.30 p.m. by three or four German cruisers at very close range, the "Tipperary" herself was irreparably damaged, her next astern, "Spitfire," was also badly hit, and the rest of the flotilla in the confusion of the action separated one from another. "Spitfire," by herself after this action, was seeking to rejoin her flotilla when quite suddenly a German cruiser tried to ram her. She quickly put her helm hard over and went full speed ahead, thereby just avoiding the cruiser's ram, but by so little that, "with an awful crash the two ships met end on, port bow to port bow," and the German cruiser "surged down our port side, clearing everything before her, boats and even davits being torn out of their sockets, and all the time firing her guns just over our heads." But so close were the two ships together that the German could not depress his guns sufficiently to hit the "Spitfire," yet the blast of the guns firing "literally cleared everything before it; our mast came tumbling down, our for'ard searchlight found its way from its platform above the fore-bridge down on to the deck, and the foremost funnel was blown back till it rested neatly between the two foremost ventilation cowls like the hinging funnel of a penny river steamer."*

*Sixty odd feet of plating from the German cruisers' fo'c'sle was left in "Spitfire's" side as a memento of this incident.*

*A little later another extraordinary incident occurred, perhaps the strangest of all the strange incidents of Jutland.*

*The "Spitfire's" crew were just recovering from their ramming match with the German cruiser, and most of the ship's company were collected aft, when "suddenly there was a cry from nearly a dozen people at once, 'Look out!' I looked up, and saw a few hundred yards away, on our starboard*

<sup>1</sup> I think, however, that it is proper to point out, and the Flotilla would wish it pointed out, that these adventures must be read as adventures, and it must not be inferred that they had a great influence on the Battle of Jutland. They did not, for the Flotilla did not sink more than one, possibly two, enemy ships. The ships of the 4th Flotilla were mostly small oldish destroyers, and together formed no more than a very small fraction of the total strength of the Grand Fleet. As was natural, the work they did was no more than that of which such a small Force was capable. Their adventures, however, certainly exceeded those of all the battleships put together.



quarter, what appeared to be a battle cruiser on fire, steering straight for our stern. . . . To our intense relief she missed our stern by a few feet, but so close was she to us that it seemed that we were actually under her guns, which were trained out on her starboard beam. She tore past us with a roar, rather like a motor roaring up hill on low gear, and the very crackling and heat of the flames could be heard and felt. She was a mass of fire from fore-mast to main-mast, on deck and between decks, . . . flames were issuing out of her from every corner. She appeared to us to be a battle cruiser, as her funnels were so far apart, but afterwards it transpired that quite possibly she was the unfortunate 'Black Prince,' with her two centre funnels gone. Soon afterwards, about midnight, there came an explosion from the direction in which she had disappeared."

. . . . .

These were two of "Spitfire's" adventures.

Meanwhile "Broke" had collected together some of the scattered flotilla, and had almost immediately come into action, either with the same group of German ships again, or with a fresh ship, possibly a battleship. "Broke" was very badly hit, losing 47 men killed and 36 wounded out of a crew of about 190 ; her steering wheel was shot away by a shell, and not under control she swung out of the line. "Sparrowhawk" was her next astern, and swinging in the same direction in order to bring the sights of her torpedo tube to bear upon the enemy, crashed into the swinging "Broke" before it was possible to avoid collision. The force of the collision hurled a few men of the "Sparrowhawk" across on to the deck of the "Broke" (where later they were met with the not unnatural query, "Who the h—l are you?") and amidst clouds of escaping steam, smoke, and the splashes of shells, the two destroyers lay locked hard and fast together. Each ship thought that she was sinking. "Broke" sent some of her men across to "Sparrowhawk" to save their lives ; "Sparrowhawk" sent some across to "Broke." Neither ship sank.

Eventually the two ships parted themselves, but as they did so another destroyer of the 4th Flotilla, the "Contest," came out of the darkness and crashed into the stern of "Sparrowhawk," jamming her rudder hard over, thus crippling "Sparrowhawk" both ends.

"Broke" then disappeared, and very much injured struggled back across the North Sea through a rising gale. Two German destroyers were met and engaged on the way back, but they broke off the action after a few minutes unaware of the crippled state of their opponent, and eventually the "Broke" sighted land at 5.0 p.m. on Saturday, the 3rd June ; she had received her damage 65 hours before, at about midnight on Wednesday, 31st May.

Then the "Sparrowhawk," sans bow, sans stern, lay off in the darkness, a helpless wreck, and waited for what fate might have in store for her. Fate played with her. A German destroyer, at about 2 a.m., came up to within 100 yards of her, and then stopped. The "Sparrowhawk's" men prepared for a final fight using their one remaining gun before this destroyer should kill them,

but suddenly, and for no apparent reason, the German destroyer “started her engines again, gathered way, and disappeared into the darkness.”

For 3½ hours nothing more happened, but then, out of the misty half-light of the morning, a dim shape approached which with despair was recognised to be that of one of the latest German light cruisers, and the “Sparrowhawk's” again prepared for their end. “Fellows went about sort of whispering that this must be the end of all things, and asked each other what it was like to be dead.” But their course was not yet run. The light cruiser started to heel over to one side, to settle down forward, then quietly stood on her head, and—sank.

. . . . .

Meanwhile “Tipperary,” a blazing wreck since the time of her first action at 11.30 p.m., with the ammunition at the forward guns exploding box by box at short intervals, and an occasional German closing her to fire a few rounds or at another time only to inspect her, at last reached her end, and about 2 a.m. sank by the bow.

A few of the survivors of her crew took to life-saving rafts—the boats had been smashed up by gunfire—and others just swam off to take their chance in the sea, for the rafts could not hold all who were left. Three hours later one of these raft loads came across a ship, or rather the remains of a ship, for it was what was left of the “Sparrowhawk,” the destroyer without bows or stern. 26 survivors of “Tipperary” were hauled aboard the “Sparrowhawk.” They had been recognised afar off by the tune they were singing, “It's a long, long way to Tipperary,” although the officer with them on account of exposure, “could not think of the words, and my music was all one note.” Eventually an undamaged destroyer, the “Marksman,” came across the “Sparrowhawk,” and the survivors of both ships were brought back in safety to Scotland.

But, alas, the casualties to the 4th Flotilla did not belong only to “Tipperary,” “Broke,” “Sparrowhawk,” or “Spitfire.” Stationed in rear of our battle fleet, the 4th flotilla happened to be directly in the path of the German squadrons steering from the scene of the day action towards Horn Reef, and one or another boat of the flotilla continued to be in action with enemy ships during most of the night.

H.M.S. “Fortune,” almost at the same time as “Tipperary” was damaged, was sunk by the concentrated gunfire of three or four German heavy ships, and not long afterwards H.M.S. “Ardent,” her sister ship, chummy ship, and subdivisional mate, was also sunk by gunfire. Of “Ardent's” crew there were only two survivors, one of whom, the Captain, was rescued about six hours after her loss by the “Marksman.” Of “Fortune's” crew of about eighty officers and men, only two raft loads of men were saved, these also by the “Marksman.”

Other destroyers of the flotilla, the “Garland,” the “Porpoise,” the “Contest,” the “Ambuscade,” and others were sharers in much of this fighting, and had other adventures which have not been mentioned here, for example:—



" . . . We were steaming south as we believed our fleet was going in that direction, when suddenly we sighted an extraordinary object straight ahead. The sea was flat calm and the night hazy, and this object appeared like a large fountain coming towards us. It was right on top of us before we realised that it was a destroyer, her bows badly damaged, throwing up an immense sheet of spray as she steamed along at 20 knots. She passed us so close that I could read her number—it was 'Contest' our subdivisional mate whom we had last seen ramming the black mass of 'Broke' and 'Sparrowhawk.' I hailed her, but the only reply I got was a cheer from the men on her deck as she flashed by. . . . We turned and gave chase and eventually gained touch with her, and she formed astern of us. . . ."

In the chapter that follows there are narratives from H.M.S. "Broke," "Spitfire," "Sparrowhawk," "Ardent," and "Tipperary." They narrate the strange adventures which fell to the lot of "Tipperary's" Flotilla on the night of 31st May–1st June, 1916.

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## Narrative of the Navigating Officer of H.M.S. "Broke."

Half-Flotilla Leader of "Tipperary's" Flotilla.

On reaching our station 5 miles astern of *King George V.*, the flotilla turned to south and reduced to 17 knots. Captain D. formed the destroyers in single line ahead, *Tipperary* leading the 1st Half-Flotilla, with *Broke* in the centre of the line leading the rear four or five destroyers.

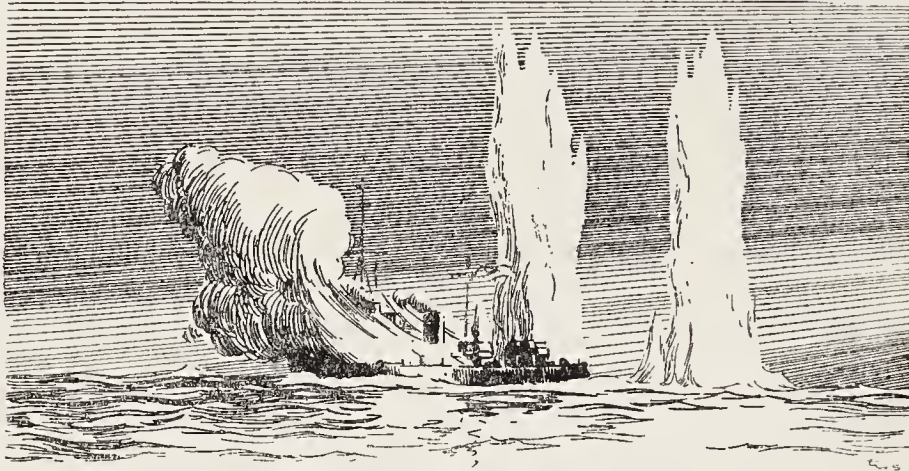
It was by this time about 9.30 p.m., and quite dark. Our chief anxiety was that we were unaware of the relative positions of any of our ships or squadrons except the battle fleet, and also we did not know the position of the enemy. From time to time flashes of gunfire were seen on the star-board bow, but it was impossible to estimate their distance, or from whom they came.

At about 9.50 a very violent explosion was seen almost right ahead, flames reaching a height of several hundred feet. For one moment the ship suddenly seemed to stop dead; then, giving a series of short heaves, she went on again. On the bridge we immediately thought that we had fouled some submerged obstruction, but the engine-room reported that it felt like an underwater explosion; at all events, no damage was caused. We wondered if the battle fleet were being attacked. All officers and men were closed up at night action stations, as it was inadvisable to fall out any guns' crews owing to the likely proximity of the enemy.



## “Tipperary” Put Out of Action.

Soon after 9.50 p.m. a ship was sighted coming up on the port quarter on a similar course to our own. After a great deal of gazing through glasses we made her out to be one of our light cruisers, and shortly afterwards *Tipperary* was seen to flash the challenge and get the correct answer. Owing to the darkness and mist, I noticed that her hull could not be seen more than three-quarters of a mile away.



“TIPPERARY” HIT BY A GERMAN SALVO.

Some little time after this light cruiser had disappeared into the darkness, the outlines of three ships were made out on the starboard beam, also steaming in the same direction as ourselves. As far as we could make out they appeared to be four-funnelled light cruisers, and the Captain and I both thought that they were one of our light cruiser squadrons. *Tipperary* was again seen to make the challenge, but this time, to our great surprise, it was answered by the simultaneous switching on of searchlights in all three ships. It became impossible to see their outlines any longer, but *Tipperary’s* hull was almost at once silhouetted against the darkness, getting clearer and clearer as each successive searchlight focussed itself upon her. For a moment one beam rested on us, but a second later it swung round ahead on to our unfortunate leader.

Almost simultaneously a heavy and accurate fire was directed on *Tipperary*. Splashes of the shells striking the water all round her could be seen, and in what appeared to be less than a minute she burst into flames. I still felt certain that these ships were our own cruisers, and so did the Captain, for without any hesitation he ordered me not to turn away and fire torpedoes until we could definitely establish the fact that they were Germans.

Fortunately, at this moment, one stray searchlight beam from the leading ship swept aft and rested on the rear ship of her squadron. Although

it was only for an instant, it was time enough for us to recognise the ship as an enemy. The Captain at once gave the order "Carry on," and we turned away and fired the starboard after torpedo tube, increasing to full speed immediately afterwards. The necessary directions had been passed to the torpedo tubes immediately the ships were sighted, so there was no delay in firing once their identity was established. Nearly everyone on deck declared afterwards that we scored a hit, but on the bridge we were so occupied in keeping a look-out ahead to avoid ramming any of our own destroyers, that it was impossible to watch the course of the torpedo. At all events, the enemy almost immediately switched off all lights, and we did not see them again.

### "Broke's" Action about Midnight.

We now found ourselves steaming full speed into the darkness, with nothing in sight except a burning mass on the starboard quarter, which must have been the remains of the unfortunate *Tipperary*. The Captain accordingly ordered me to bring the ship back to the original course South and to reduce to 17 knots, the speed of the fleet, in order to have a look round and see if we could collect our destroyers together again. His intention was to attempt another attack on the three enemy ships before they had time to get too far away, and we hoped that the rest of our destroyers had fired torpedoes when we did, and would, therefore, not be far off. As we turned *Sparrowhawk* was sighted, and took station astern of us.

Almost as soon as the ship was steadied on her course south, the hull of a large ship was sighted on the starboard bow on a more or less parallel course, but this time well before the beam and not more than half a mile away. The Captain immediately gave the order to challenge, but almost as he spoke the stranger switched on a vertical string of coloured lights, some green and some red, an unknown signal in our service.

"Starboard 20; full speed ahead both; starboard foremost tube fire when your sights come on; all guns—Green 40—a battleship," and various other orders were simultaneously shouted down the various voice pipes on the bridge, but the German had evidently been watching our movements, and we were too late.

Within a few seconds of our seeing his recognition signal, he switched on a blaze of searchlights straight into our eyes, and so great was the dazzling effect that it made us feel quite helpless. Then after another interval of about a second, shells could be heard screaming over our heads, and I vaguely remember seeing splashes in the water short of us and also hearing the sound of our 4-inch guns returning the fire of this German battleship, which we afterwards had strong reason to believe was *Westfalen*.<sup>1</sup> I then remember feeling the ship give a lurch to one side as a salvo

<sup>1</sup> *Westfalen* was leading the German line.



hit us, and hearing the sound of broken glass and débris flying around, after which the searchlights went out, and we were once more in the darkness.<sup>1</sup>

### “Broke” Collides with “Sparrowhawk.”

At this moment I became conscious of the fact that I could get no answer from the quartermaster at the wheel, so shouting to the Captain that I was going below, I jumped down on to the lower bridge. There, in the darkness, I found complete chaos. The quartermaster and telegraphman were both killed, and the wheel and telegraphs were shattered and apparently useless. I found our midshipman had followed me down to assist, and we were both just starting to strike matches to make certain that communication with the engine-room was gone, when I heard the Captain’s voice down the pipe shouting, “Full speed astern both.”

I looked up for an instant and saw a green bow light of some other ship just ahead of us, and then with a terrific crash the ship brought up all standing, and we were hurled against the bridge screens by the force of the collision.

On picking myself up I at once saw that we had one of our own destroyers bumping alongside, and an ugly-looking rent in her side abreast of the bridge showed where we had hit her. Steam was roaring out of our foremost boiler-rooms, and it was extremely difficult to see or hear anything. Our ship appeared to be settling by the bow, and at intervals gave unpleasant lurches from side to side, which for the moment made me feel that she might be sinking. I went down on the forecastle to try and find out the extent of our damage, and to see what had happened, and to my surprise found a strange officer standing there, who turned out to be the sub-lieutenant of the *Sparrowhawk*, the destroyer which we had rammed. He informed me he had been pitched on board by the force of the collision, and I afterwards found out that three of her men had had the same experience. I remember vaguely telling him that I thought our ship was not much use, and that he had better go and find out if *Sparrowhawk* could steam, as he said he did not think she had been hit by gunfire.

I then went in search of the Captain, and found him still on the bridge. After I had reported to him the name of the destroyer we had collided with, he ordered me to go aft and get the after steering gear connected, while he went to his sea cabin to dispose of the confidential books. Although the German battleship had ceased firing, we felt she might appear again at any moment. Getting aft was no easy job, as all the ladders were gone, and

<sup>1</sup> An examination afterwards of the wheel and telegraphs showed that the pointer on the dial of the port telegraph was at “Full speed,” while that of the starboard was still at “Half-speed,” and the wheel indicator showed 15 degrees of starboard helm, which appears to prove that the orders “Starboard 20; full speed ahead both,” given immediately the hostile challenge was seen was not yet completely obeyed before the enemy shell hit us. This will give an idea of the rapidity with which the German ship switched on searchlights and opened fire.





"DEFENDER" GETTING AN 11-IN. SHELL IN HER FOREMOST BOILER.



"BROKE'S" UPPER BRIDGE.

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scalding steam was hissing out of the boiler-rooms from a dozen different places, but the 1st Lieutenant and I together succeeded in getting there after a bit of a struggle.

Here I found the engineer officer, who, having been informed by a stoker that everyone on the bridge had gone, was very pleased to see us. He had stopped the engines on his own initiative, and was extremely cheering in his news that there was no damage aft, and that, as three boilers were more or less all right, we could steam slowly for the time being.

The after bridge was then commissioned, and as we were bumping very heavily against the *Sparrowhawk*, we went astern into the darkness to clear her. It was not a moment too soon, for just as we got clear another destroyer suddenly appeared out of the darkness, and before we could give a word of warning came crashing into *Sparrowhawk's* stern. I remember recognising her as *Contest* by the number painted on her bows.

At the time we felt rather pleased that she had arrived, even in this manner, for she would now be able to look after *Sparrowhawk*, for whose condition we felt some responsibility.

### The Passage Home.

On getting clear we steamed to the northward at slow speed, and I remember looking at my watch and seeing that it was a quarter past midnight. Although most of the forward part was flooded, the ship seemed quite seaworthy, and we speedily discovered that the bulkhead before the foremost boiler-room was sound, which seemed very hopeful, and a party was thereupon sent down to shore it up. Reports from the engine-room, although a trifle gloomy at first owing to a shortage of fresh water, rapidly improved, and eventually the engineer officer said he thought we could maintain revolutions for 10 knots for a more or less indefinite time. The way in which he and his staff located the damage below and shut steam off the damaged boilers was really splendid.

The wounded, some 34 in number, including the sub-lieutenant and the paymaster who were both hit in the legs by splinters, were got below, while the dead, numbering 42, were buried as soon as possible. Our surgeon at this time was badly wanted, but I am sorry to say he was among the killed. Six men were found to be missing, and their fate remained unknown to us.

Day was now slowly breaking, and our hopes of getting away safely were fast rising, but at 1.15 they sank almost to zero when we sighted two German destroyers on our starboard quarter, steaming towards us at full speed.

We had only two serviceable guns left, and both of these were aft, so we turned our stern to the enemy at once and increased speed to our utmost safe limit—about 10 knots. As they closed I remember a feeling of extreme disgust and disappointment at being thus caught after having been so lucky in making our escape from the other ships.



The Germans, however, appeared to be feeling even more scared than we were, which was saying a good deal. On approaching to within 500 or 600 yards they turned up together abreast of us, and the leader opened fire with his bow gun. We replied with our starboard after gun, which was the only one remaining that would bear, and to our astonishment and joy both ships put over their helms and disappeared into the early morning mist, leaving us alone, still above water. They had scored two hits amidships, but these fortunately did little or no damage.

After this somewhat unpleasant incident no more enemy ships were sighted, and we proceeded on our slow and somewhat tedious passage to the northward.

During the day (June 1st) we were able to examine the damage done to the ship, both by shell fire and by the collision with *Sparrowhawk*. The damage due to shell fire, considering the very short time we were under fire, was enormous. The ship had been hit roughly a dozen times between the bow and the second funnel, though abaft that she was untouched; there were indications that two hits must have been from 11-inch shells.

Several rounds burst in the coal bunkers, fortunately doing little or no damage, but one large shell exploded at the base of the foremost funnel, and this caused the damage to the foremost boilers. Another shell burst on the starboard side of the lower bridge, and it was this one that had wrecked the bridge, chart-house, and steering gear, and been the cause of our collision with *Sparrowhawk*. The upper bridge had practically nothing left intact on it. Bits of the magnets from inside the compass binnacles were strewn about the deck, while the range-finder, search-lights, and semaphores were all smashed to bits. How any officers and men who were on the bridge escaped, it is difficult to imagine.

Another small shell burst on the foremost mess deck, and caused a large proportion of the casualties to our crew, and there was evidence that several men, rushing forward to escape, had avoided this shell burst, only to be immediately killed as the bows of the ship crumpled up in our collision with the *Sparrowhawk*.

During the night of Thursday to Friday, 1st to 2nd June, the wind and sea got up considerably, and by 4 a.m. on the 2nd it was blowing so hard from the N.W., and the ship was bumping so badly, that it became evident that our bulkheads would not stand it much longer. At about midnight our fore-mast rolled over the side, most of the rigging having been shot away. At 6 a.m. on the 2nd we were reluctantly compelled to turn round to the south-east, so as to get the sea astern, and during the whole of that day we remained thus, heading back towards Heligoland, but going dead slow so as not to close the German coast more than was absolutely necessary. Towards sunset, however, the wind and sea began to moderate, and we slowly hauled round to the westward bit by bit, like a sailing ship hauling off a lee shore, and at 8 p.m. that night decided to make for the Tyne.

At 5 p.m. on Saturday, 3rd June, land was sighted, much to everyone's relief, and shortly afterwards we were met by some of our destroyers from Rosyth and escorted into the Tyne, where, after discharging the wounded, we were berthed alongside *Bonaventure*. Here we were only too pleased to accept the hospitality of a bath and a good dinner, and the sleeping accommodation which the officers of that ship kindly gave us.

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## H.M.S. "Spitfire" and the Night Action of Jutland.

31st May to 2nd June, 1916.

The night was dark, and in the *Spitfire* we had absolutely no idea of where the enemy were, and only a very vague idea of the position of our own ships.

The flotilla was in single line ahead, Captain "D" in the *Tipperary* leading, followed by *Spitfire*, *Sparrowhawk*, and some eight other destroyers, with *Broke* (half-flotilla leader) in the middle of the line. Our course at about 9.0 p.m. was south, speed 17 knots, and it was pretty evident to us that there would be something doing during the night, though we were very nervous that we might run into our own ships by mistake.

Between 9.0 and 10.0 p.m. a series of flashes and explosions were seen to the southward, and at about 9.45 p.m. the sudden blood-red flame of a violent explosion was seen in the distance. The shock to the ship which followed was so great that at first we thought we had fouled some submerged object. Personally, for a moment I thought we had struck a mine or been torpedoed.

About 10.15 p.m.<sup>1</sup> the last destroyer in the line reported three vessels closing us from astern, and shortly afterwards we could distinguish them as what appeared to be three four-funnelled cruisers steaming at high speed on our starboard quarter, course about south-west by south, which was nearly parallel to our course but closing in about 20°. Occasional flames from their funnels were seen, but their identity could not be established. As they kept closing us and *Tipperary* did not challenge, we concluded that they must be British, but when they were in to, I should think, 500 to 700 yards' range and nearly abeam of us, *Tipperary* made the challenge. The reply was all three ships switching on one blaze of searchlights. The majority of these lights were trained on the *Tipperary*, and only a few stray beams lit on us and on our next astern. Then these lights immediately went out, and after an extraordinarily short pause were switched on again, and at the same moment a regular rain of shell was concentrated on our unfortunate leader, and in less than a minute she was hit and badly on fire forward.

<sup>1</sup> This time was actually between 11.15 and 11.30 p.m.



We immediately opened fire, and at the same time the Captain turned the ship away to bring the after torpedo tube to bear. We fired a torpedo, then waited until, much to our joy and relief, it was seen to get the second enemy’s ship between the after funnel and the mainmast, and she seemed to stop firing, heel over, and all her lights went out; but instead of the violent explosion we expected to see there appeared a kind of dull red glow, and then fire seemed to spread forward and aft from where she was hit. It struck me as exactly like a large set piece at a firework display; the fuse being lit, and the fire spreading along from one firework to the next all along the frame.

By this time we had been hit several times. The after guns’ crew and the torpedo party were suffering the most casualties, but the latter luckily not until after they had fired our second torpedo, from the foremost tube, at the leading enemy ship, apparently their flagship. I believe however it passed ahead of her. Our helm was put hard a starboard, and we increased to full speed with the idea of hauling out the line to reload our torpedo tube with the remaining spare torpedo, which was kept on the upper deck. But at that moment we were hit by a salvo, and, as a friend in the next ship astern said to me afterwards, “You seemed to disappear with a salvo hitting you amidships, one great sheet of flame.” I think, personally, that this was the salvo which hit us by No. 2 funnel, as afterwards a large shell hole was found through the base of this funnel, probably made by an 8-inch shell which had scraped the top of the boiler and gone out the port side.

### German Cruiser tries to ram “Spitfire.”

We now eased down and surveyed the general situation, taking the opportunity to order the after tube to be reloaded with the spare torpedo. But this proved to be impossible as the torpedo davit was broken up, the winch wires were splintered, and the majority of the torpedo ratings were wounded or killed. With the exception of these men and the after guns’ crew, our casualties up to now were extremely small considering that we had been under the fire of big ships, at point blank range, for several minutes, which shows how difficult it is to hit a destroyer at night unless concentrated fire is brought to bear on her the moment she is seen. But as we were now unable to fire torpedoes, the Captain decided to return to the *Tipperary*, to see if he could help her in any way, and if necessary we could carry on action with our guns.

We closed the *Tipperary*, now a mass of burning wreckage and looking a very sad sight indeed. At a distance her bridge, wheel-house, and chart-house appeared to be one sheet of flame, giving one the impression of a burning house, and so bright was the light from this part that it seemed to obliterate one’s vision of the remainder of the ship and of the sea round about, except that part close to her which was all lit up, reflecting the





COLLISION BETWEEN "SPITFIRE" AND GERMAN LIGHT CRUISER.

*From a Painting.]*

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flames. As we neared the *Tipperary*, we saw a German cruiser hovering near. Suddenly the Captain realised that she had seen us, and was trying to ram us. She was coming at us full speed across our port bow. The Captain ordered, "Hard-a-starboard: full speed ahead both," and, leaning over the bridge screen, shouted, "Clear the foc'sle." It wasn't a minute too soon, as with an awful crash the two ships met end on, port bow to port bow, we steaming almost 27 knots, she steaming not less than 10 knots (perhaps 20 or more). You can imagine how the  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch plates of a destroyer would feel such a blow. I can recollect a fearful crash, then being hurled across the deck, and feeling the *Spitfire* rolling over to starboard as no sea ever made her roll. As we bumped, the enemy opened fire with their fo'csle guns, though luckily they could not depress them to hit us, but the blast of the guns literally cleared everything before it. Our foremast came tumbling down, our for'ard searchlight found its way from its platform above the fore-bridge down to the deck, and the foremost funnel was blown back till it rested neatly between the two foremost ventilation cowls, like the hinging funnel of a penny river steamboat. The enemy, probably it was the cruiser *Elbing* that blew herself up at dawn next day, surged down our port side, clearing everything before her; the boats came crashing down and even the davits were torn out of their sockets, and all the time she was firing her guns just over our heads. But none of her shells hit us, except two fired from her fo'csle guns just before the ramming, which passed through the canvas screens round the bridge. The Captain was standing on the bridge, but bent down, whether or not with an object I don't know, and the shell passed across the top of his head taking his cap with it, and left only a skin-deep though nasty wound. With the exception of the Captain, the coxswain, and one seaman, who later on were all extricated with much difficulty from the wreckage, everybody on the bridge was killed by these two shells. Eventually the cruiser passed down the length of us, cleared us astern and disappeared, leaving us still afloat, but drifting and in a somewhat pitiful condition.

Luck now turned against us as fires started breaking out forward, and to make matters worse all the lights were short-circuited, so that anyone going up to the bridge received strong electric shocks. Moreover, all the electric bells in the ship were ringing, which made things feel rather creepy.

It was extraordinary the way fire spread, burning strongly in places where one thought there was hardly anything inflammable, such as on the fore-bridge and the decks, but flags, signal halliards, and the cocoanut matting on the deck all caught fire, and sparks from the latter were flying about everywhere. We thought the light would be sure to draw some enemy's fire on us, but fortunately it didn't. There was a large hole in the base of the second funnel through which flames were pouring out, and every single hose pipe in the ship seemed to be cut by splinters and useless. One got rather a nasty shock by walking one moment on a small



fountain from the fire main and the next minute stepping on something smouldering or burning. The Downton pump (fire pump) had been sent hurling into the air, and had landed on top of the unfortunate chief stoker, but he was got out and the doctor attended to his injuries.

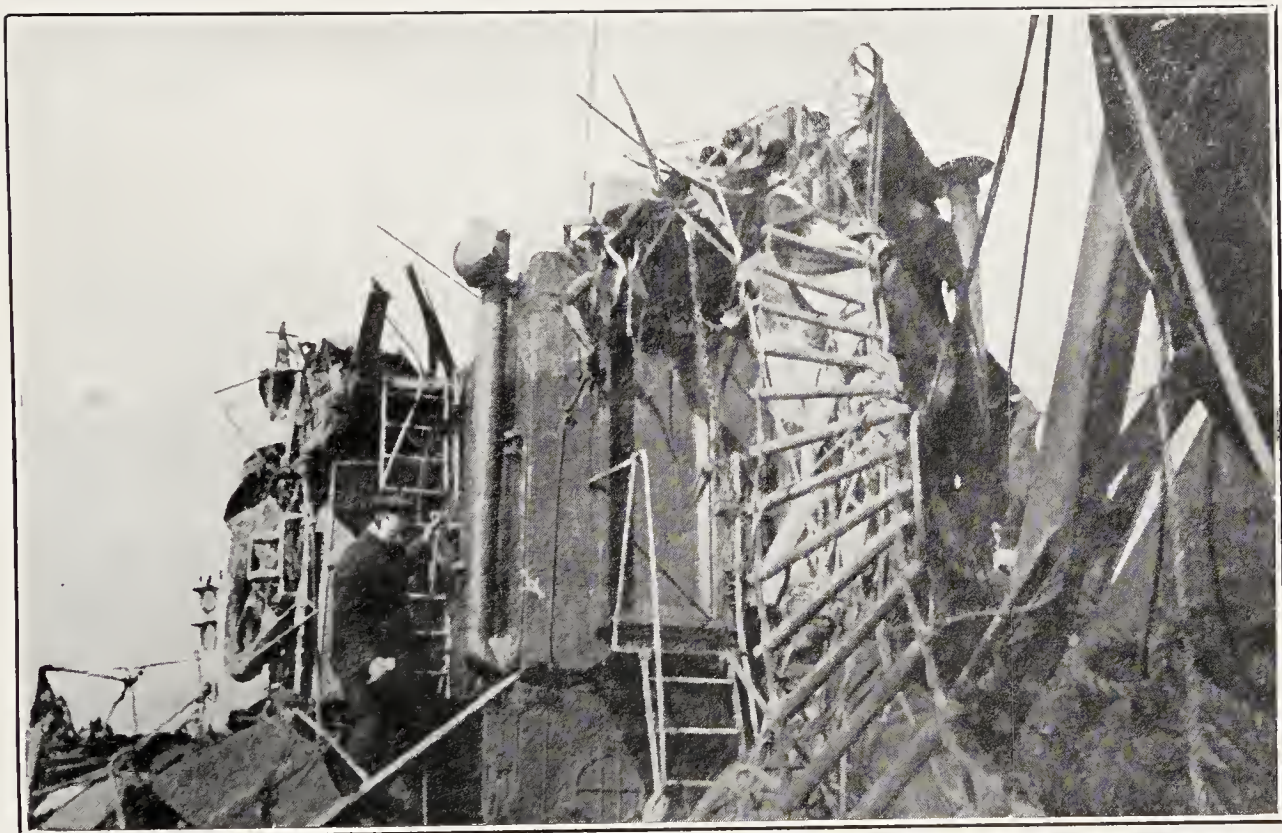
We rigged a voice pipe down to the engine-room from the compass aft, and for about half an hour steered by that. The doctor, a young surgeon probationer, did some fine work during this time. His chief success was amputating, single-handed and without any anæsthetic, an able seaman's leg, who with the coxswain was found lying amongst the wreckage on the bridge. While he was performing this operation the fire party were busy all round him with their fire hose. It was marvellous the way this young doctor moved about, eventually getting all the wounded into the ward-room and cabins, and he never left them or took any rest himself until we arrived in harbour 36 hours later.

The actual damage to the bows and ship's side was considerable. About 60 odd feet from our stem aft along the port side had been torn away, and in exchange the enemy had left 20 feet of her upper deck inside our mess deck. From examination of this it was decided that it was her fo'csle, as such anchor gear as cat davit blocks, cat pendant, etc., were found left behind. (There was considerably less than 20 feet by the time it was landed, as on our arrival in harbour a party of men with chisels and hammers came on board to collect mementoes.) The fact that the high fo'csle of a cruiser should be as low as the mess deck of a destroyer, indicated that the enemy must previously have been badly damaged and must have been down by the bows when she rammed us. Along our side were indentations as far aft as the mainmast, but there was not much damage abaft the fo'csle. The mast was lying in three parts on the port side of the upper deck amidst a débris of wires, flags and matting, and twisted and broken stanchions, etc.

After an inspection of the engine-room and boiler-rooms, the engineers decided that the good ship was capable of steaming with three out of the four boilers, and up till now the bulkheads were holding all right, so the after steering position was connected up, we shaped course west speed 6 knots, and all began to feel happier. To our joy the Captain suddenly turned up, alive though rather badly knocked about, as he had been blown off the bridge on to the upper deck, a distance of about 24 feet. Also the Sub-lieutenant, who was the last to leave the fo'csle before the crash and who had been thrown off the fo'csle on to the upper deck, re-appeared, and so too did the Gunner. All the confidential books were destroyed, and we held a council of war as to our next movements.

### The Passing of the Ship on Fire.

Just at this time all our ship's company started to collect aft, owing to a misunderstanding in the order "Connect up aft," referring to the



DAMAGE TO "SPITFIRE'S" BRIDGE.

Caused by Blast of German Light Cruisers' Guns. Photo looking from Aft.





steering gear, being mistaken for "Everybody aft." Before the mistake was realised almost all the ship's company had collected aft, when suddenly there was a cry from nearly a dozen people at once, "Look out!" I looked up, and saw a few hundred yards away on our starboard quarter what appeared to be a battle cruiser on fire steering straight for our stern. We thought that she was steering for us with the intention of cutting us in two, and we thought that we were done for; I believe the majority of us lay down and waited for the crash. But no crash came. To our intense relief she missed our stern by a few feet, but so close was she to us that it seemed that we were actually lying under her guns, which were trained out on her starboard beam. She tore past us with a roar, rather like a motor roaring up hill on low gear, and the very crackling and heat of the flames could be heard and felt. She was a mass of fire from foremast to mainmast, on deck and between decks. Flames were issuing out of her from every corner. She appeared to us to be a battle cruiser as her funnels were so far apart, but afterwards it transpired that quite possibly she was the unfortunate *Black Prince* with her two centre funnels shot away.

Soon afterwards, about midnight, there came an explosion from the direction in which she had gone.

. . . . .

### The Return to Harbour.

The remains of a chart were patched together, and we came to the conclusion that, being no further use as a destroyer, we had best steer to the westward at the utmost speed the bulkheads would stand—about 6 knots.

As we had no signalmen left, likewise no signalling lamps, we had to prepare to use an ordinary electric torch for replying to a challenge should this be necessary. Wireless, of course, was out of the question as the mast had gone, and we could get no result from a secondary aerial and set that was rigged up. Mess tables, collision mats, and shores were used to try and fill up the gaping bow, but they were all washed inboard again time after time, as the wind and sea were now fast rising.

By dawn, June 1st, the sea had risen a good deal and the wind was still freshening from the south-west, and about 8.0 a.m. we had to turn the ship head to sea and ease down. All store-rooms, shell-rooms, and lower mess decks forward being flooded we began to get very anxious whether the fore boiler-room bulkhead would stand the strain. At dawn the Captain ordered a tot of rum to be served out all round, and I must say that cheered up the men no end. Luckily the galley was not damaged, and we all got some food, the men in there and the officers in the after canopy round the wheel.

We held a very impressive funeral service for the seven men who had been killed. In accordance with the custom of the Service, they were lashed up in their hammocks, with a practice projectile at their head and feet, and laid on the quarter deck. Volunteers acted as bearers, and the Captain read the funeral service. The colours under which they had fought were half-masted, and we lowered their bodies as reverently as we could in to the deep; there was a big sea running. Then we turned to and cleared up the ship.

Two gun crews were organised and kept manned in case of meeting anyone, but except for one Norwegian merchant ship, which realising we were in a bad way offered to take us off, we met no one. We refused the Norwegian's offer, but made use of him to assist our navigation by shaping course along the track he had left, which we assumed would lead us to some port or other.

In the dog watches the sea got up and the wind increased so considerably that we had to turn to north to keep the sea on our quarter. We organised a complete but rather “Harry Tate” signalling outfit. It consisted of bearing out spars lashed on to what remained of the bridge, and several flags cut up so as to make the flags we might urgently require, principally those for the “challenges” for the next twenty-four hours.

Our hopes of getting home fell during that night (June 1st-2nd), as the weather gradually became worse and worse, and about 1.0 a.m. we decided that the only thing to do was to fire distress signals, estimating that we were about 60 miles from the English, or it might be the Scottish, coast.

As we were on the point of doing this, at about 2.0 a.m. (June 2nd), suddenly—it seemed like a miracle—the wind died down, and the sea got smoother and smoother, until at 4.30 a.m. we turned to west-south-west and increased speed to about 10 knots. As the morning drew on we met a patrol drifter, which informed us we were 22 miles E.N.E. of the Tyne. After making such a land fall as this, we came to the conclusion that *the* best aids to navigation are a torn piece of a chart, a book-case batten as a ruler, and the wake of the last met merchant ship as sailing directions! From then onwards I lost all idea of time, but we steamed into the Tyne with every single flag hoisted that we could think of as means of recognition, being frightened of the War Signal Station, and not being able to reply to her searchlight challenges.

We berthed at Jarrow by H.M.S. *Bonaventure*, whose officers and men showed us the greatest kindness. They sent over a party to tidy up the ship, and our entire ship's company went over to her for baths and a good square meal. We were all very glad of both.





DAMAGE TO "SPITFIRE" CAUSED BY BLAST OF GERMAN LIGHT CRUISERS' GUNS.

Photo taken when entering the Tyne on June 2nd. Damage to Side caused by the Collision with the German ship during night of 31st May.

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## The Adventures of H.M.S. "Sparrowhawk."

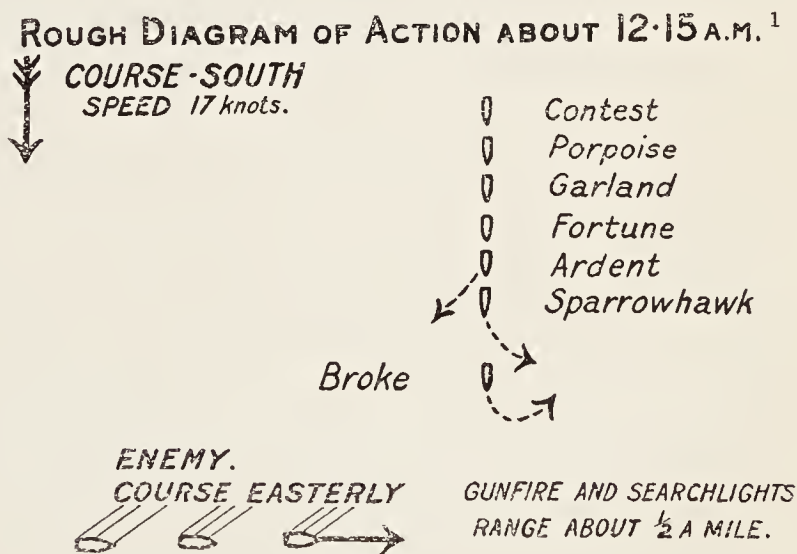
The original narrative commences with a description of the first part of the night and of the action about 11.30 in which "Tipperary" was set on fire. This part is excluded as the incidents are related in "Broke's" and "Tipperary's" narratives.

### Collision with H.M.S. "Broke."

The enemy had by now switched off all his searchlights, and the only ship to be seen was one about 3 miles away on our starboard quarter, which was burning fiercely, and must we knew be either the *Tipperary* or the *Spitfire*. Sounds of gunfire were coming from her, and when we had recovered our sight in a respite from the glare of the German searchlights, we eased speed and turned to close this burning vessel, thinking we might find some German destroyers hanging round her. But we had only gone about a mile when we sighted the *Broke*, still hale and hearty, and we were ordered to take station astern of her. About now we were joined by others of our flotilla, *Contest*, *Ardent*, and *Fortune*, and, I think, two or three others.

At about 12.15 a string of coloured lights suddenly appeared right ahead of *Broke*, and I remember saying to my Captain, "My God, sir, there are those devils again!"

The lights were kept on for three seconds, then a blaze of searchlights was switched on to us from it seemed every direction, and from so close a range that they seemed to come from almost directly above us. At the same instant gunfire from apparently every direction burst out at us. The noise was terrific; the smell and fumes of bursting shell were simply choking, and to add to it all there was the blinding glare of searchlights wherever one looked. Speed was at once increased to full, about 28 knots, the helm was put hard over to bring *Sparrowhawk* round to port, and orders were passed to fire the remaining torpedo.



<sup>1</sup> The order of the Flotilla is not certain: it is possible that not all these 7 destroyers were present in the line. But the relative position of *Broke* and *Sparrowhawk* to the enemy was as shown.

*Broke*, ahead of us, had also put her helm over to steer out to port away from the enemy, but just as we were both turning I saw *Broke* hit by a salvo forward, and, to my horror, when she should have eased her helm and steadied on a course to fire a torpedo as we were doing, I saw that she was still swinging very quickly to port as if her helm was jammed hard over, and was coming round straight for us.

We were only half a cable (100 yards) apart, and I saw that a collision was absolutely inevitable; there was no time to avoid it. So, in addition to the enemy’s gunfire which was straddling us with every salvo, we saw *Broke* coming straight for our bridge, absolutely end on, at 28 knots. I remember shouting a warning to everybody in hearing to hold on, and



“SPARROWHAWK” AND “BROKE” IN COLLISION.

cried out to the fo’csle gun’s crew to clear off the fo’csle. Then I leant over the bridge and watched *Broke*’s bow coming absolutely dead straight for us. I really don’t know why, but it was a fascinating sight; I clean forgot all about the Germans and their gunfire. Just as she hit us I remember shouting out “Now!” and then nothing more till I found myself lying on the fo’csle, not of our ship, but of the *Broke*, illuminated in a bright light, but in a sort of fog which must have been due to the clouds of steam escaping from burst pipes. I sort of felt myself to see if arms and legs were all there, and then tried to stand up. My right leg hurt abominably, and I couldn’t get any sort of movement into my right arm, but otherwise I was all right, and eventually I got up, though only to fall again owing to the deck being so extraordinarily slippery. I understood later why, but at the time it did not worry me.

The whole of *Broke*’s foc’sle was an absolute shambles, but I crawled along until I came to a place where I could stand up. There was a perishing noise going on all the time, as the Germans were still endeavouring to sink



the ship, and I could not see the *Sparrowhawk* owing to the clouds of escaping steam. As I was getting to my feet I met a fellow, who said, "Who the hell are you?" I told him that I was the sub-lieutenant of the *Sparrowhawk*, and added that *Sparrowhawk* had sunk, and that I was going to report to the Captain of the *Broke* to ask for a job. He told me that the Captain was on the remains of the bridge, and disappeared.

I eventually found a ladder up to the bridge and went up, picking my way over the wreckage of the lower bridge, and found the Captain, whom I knew slightly, and reported myself to him. He didn't seem to have realised that it was the *Sparrowhawk* he had rammed until I informed him of it. He told me to go back to my Captain and tell him that he had given orders for the crew of the *Broke* to be transferred to *Sparrowhawk*, because *Broke* was sinking, and I was also to ask for *Sparrowhawk's* engines to be worked so as to endeavour to get the two ships apart, as they were now locked together and straining badly. I informed him that I was unable to see any sign of the *Sparrowhawk*, but he pointed her out to me, and I went to carry out his orders.

About this time the enemy ceased firing and switched off their searchlights, probably because the clouds of steam issuing from *Broke* and *Sparrowhawk* entirely hid them from sight.

I had to jump across a gap of about 6 feet from one ship to the other, and owing to my leg I didn't succeed in clearing it, but luckily caught the lower rail of *Sparrowhawk* with my left arm, and hung there with my body between the two ships. I holloed out and somebody heard me and hauled me on board.

I found my Captain and gave him the message from the Captain of the *Broke*. His remarks were, "But that's a pity, Sub., because I've sent across precisely the same message to him. This ship is also sinking fast!" The orders for the men to cross had actually been given, and about 20 of our ship's company went into *Broke* and about 15 men from *Broke* came across into us.

By this time the escaping steam had been got under control and the appalling noise stopped, and by means of megaphones the two Captains were able to communicate, the engines were worked, and the two ships drew apart with a sickening rending and crunching of steel plates. It was rather an anxious moment as we separated, for it was questionable whether the water-tight bulkhead would not be torn away as the ships parted, and if it did we should sink. However, it was all right. *Broke* then disappeared stern first into the darkness, and we were left alone—not in a very healthy condition. . . .

The bulkheads were now being shored up, as hopes were entertained of saving the ship, but my Captain instructed me to burn all the confidential books and documents in the boiler furnaces, which was quite a pleasing job as the night was bitterly cold. It had started to blow, and I could at least for a time keep warm at this job.

About 2 a.m. being on deck again, I saw, together with the most of the ship’s company, a German destroyer come slowly up to us until, when about 100 yards off us, she stopped, and we prepared for one final scrap with her, with the one gun and one torpedo that were left in action.

Most of the officers and men were grouped round the after gun. In the hope of saving the ship orders were given that the gun was not to fire until the enemy opened fire, and being determined to get some of his own back the Captain took gun-layer, the 1st lieutenant was the trainer, and I was to look after the spotting. The gunner stood by with his last torpedo. The rest of the gun’s crew was completed by various seamen, and those left without a job were ordered to lie down along the upper deck. We loaded, and waited for the flashes of gunfire from the German destroyer. But none came, and suddenly, just in the same way as she had appeared, she started her engines again, gathered way, and disappeared into the darkness—why we never discovered.

All this time *Tipperary* had been burning fiercely, much to our discomfort as at times the flames lit us up distinctly, and we must have been visible for miles round. Just after the enemy destroyer had gone *Tipperary* sank.

Now we had nothing to do. We could not steam, as the *Contest* in her collision with us had jammed our rudder hard over, and no matter how we worked the engines we could not do anything except steam round in circles at dead slow speed, stern first. The engineers tried to cut through the bolts holding the rudder to the ship so as to drop the rudder off, but without success, and we were unable to make headway. Our wireless was, of course, altogether out of action, but one of our operators, a boy aged only 16½, worked very hard to produce a small temporary installation, but could not get it to go. However, it was a good effort, and deserved success.

### Daylight, June 1st.

Nothing more happened till about 3.30 a.m., when it began to get light. We had spent the remainder of the night keeping warm and cheering each other up.

A large shape, which we knew was a big ship, then moved up out of the mist. We just prayed that it was one of our own. Every man on board was straining his eyes to try and make her out, and some officers were using glasses as well. Our feelings, when we saw that she was one of the latest class of German light cruisers, may perhaps be imagined. Fellows went about sort of whispering that this must be the end of all things, and asked each other what it was like to be dead, etc. We had all been a bit worried by all the night show, and it was very early on a cold windy morning, so perhaps our feelings may be excused.

As yet the German cruiser could not see us, so we got as much ammunition as possible up from the after magazine and piled it round the after



gun, for we jolly well meant, if we had to go, to take as many Germans with us as possible. Again the Captain ordered us not to be the first to open fire, as it was always hoped that some of our ships would arrive and help us to get our ship back to harbour. So we waited ; just waited for the flashes of her guns and—thought.

I had some spotting glasses and as it got light I tried hard to see men on her upper deck, for she was only about a mile and a half away and after a short time it had become really light. I thought she started to heel over to one side slightly. Then everyone else noticed it until there was actually no mistaking it. She settled down forward, very slowly, and then quietly stood on her head, and—sank. We had seemed to be absolutely done, there had seemed to be no hope whatever, and then this happened ; you can imagine what we felt like.



"IT'S A LONG, LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY."

### "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary."

The next incident occurred at 6.10 a.m., when somebody reported a submarine in sight, and once more the after-gun was manned at the run. Luckily the 1st lieutenant with his glasses made out the supposed submarine to be a Carley life-saving raft full of men, for though they were only about half a mile away, the sea was so confused that we could only catch a glimpse of them now and again.

They saw us and put up a sheet as a sail. We tried to work the engines to steam towards them, but without much success. As they managed to paddle nearer we heard them singing "It's a long, long way to Tipperary," so we knew who they were, and incidentally jolly well agreed with them. *It was a long way!*



After about an hour and a half they finally managed to get alongside, but 16 out of the 23 collapsed. Poor fellows, they were absolutely done. We managed to get them all on board with the exception of three, who were already dead, but five more died on our quarter deck. The rest amongst whom was one officer, the sub-lieutenant of the *Tipperary*, we dosed with brandy, and they soon recovered. They were all tremendously pleased to have reached something more substantial than their Carley raft at last, but we thought that it was a case of “out of the frying pan into the fire.” I remember the most cheery man of the lot was a fellow who had a hole quite as large as a half-crown right through one of his legs, but it didn’t seem to worry him in the least. They told us that in the early morning a German lifeboat had passed them full of men, and that they had hailed them and asked to be taken on board, but they had been told to go to h—l. We presumed these Huns to have been part of the crew of the German cruiser that we had just seen sink, abandoning their ship.

About 6.45 a.m. a four-funnelled light cruiser appeared on the horizon and made the private signal to us, but we were unable to reply, having nothing in the world to do so with. We could not distinguish until she challenged whether she was English or German, because it was too misty, and the German light cruisers are very similar to ours, so the after gun was again manned. When she made the challenge we realised that she was English, but hoped that she would not open fire because we were unable to reply to it. She did not, but instead she steamed away and left us, perhaps because about half a mile away from us our bows were floating bottom up—they had dropped off earlier in the morning—and she may have mistaken this for the conning tower of a submarine. Whatever was the reason we were not reticent in voicing our opinions, for every moment the wind was blowing harder and the sea getting rougher, and our ship looked like sinking.

A Dutch trawler then appeared about two miles away, and we waved every available sheet, cloth, or coat, to attract her attention, for we badly wanted her to stand by us, but she took no notice. Whether she saw us or not I do not know, but she passed on out of sight ; we cursed her good and proper.

### “Marksman” Arrives.

About 7.15 a.m. three columns of smoke appeared over the horizon, and soon afterwards three vessels came into view, which we quickly recognised to be English destroyers with a flotilla leader, the *Marksman*. They were steaming straight for us, and *Marksman* made the challenge. By this time somebody had been over the side and managed to get, from one of the signal lockers floating alongside, three flags which would make *Sparrowhawk*’s distinguishing number, and these we hoisted at the mainmast: H flag, 61 pendants. They served their purpose, and *Marks-*

*man* increased to full speed and came up alongside. Her Captain ordered all our engine-room ratings, etc., to leave the ship in case we sank whilst being taken in tow, and informed my Captain that he intended to tow the remains of *Sparrowhawk* back to harbour, if she'd stand it, which was of course exactly what we all wanted. So we made fast two 3½-inch wires round the pedestal of the after gun, and then everybody was ordered to abandon the ship in case any of the bulkheads should give way.

*Marksman* then started to tow, having reported to the Commander-in-Chief that she had found the remains of *Sparrowhawk* and had taken off survivors. But after having towed the ship for about half a mile at 3 knots, both hawsers parted, one after the other in quick succession owing to the state of the sea. At the same time signals were received by *Marksman* of the close proximity of enemy submarines. So a signal was made to the C.-in-C. that the efforts to tow had proved useless, and instructions were asked for. The C.-in-C. replied that the wreck was to be sunk and the survivors brought to Scapa Flow. Eighteen lyddite shells were then fired into the ship until she sank, the fore part going down first, and H flag, 61 pendants, and our colours, still flying from the mainmast. Thus was the end of the *Sparrowhawk*.

The officers and ship's company of the *Marksman* were most extraordinarily kind to us, giving us all that we wanted, and they told us many details of the action, of which we had seen so little.

We arrived at Scapa Flow on the Saturday morning, June 3rd, were sent to various depot ships, and finally sent south on the Monday morning.

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## Narrative of a Survivor of H.M.S. "Tipperary."

This description of the night of the 31st May to 1st June in the *Tipperary*, or afloat on her raft, is written nearly four years later, partly from memory and partly from a brief account I wrote shortly after the action.

My station, as sub-lieutenant of the ship, was on a small platform aft outside the auxiliary wireless office, in charge of the three after-guns, but the only communication which I had with the bridge was the one gun-control voice pipe, through which all control orders had to pass. I thus had little chance of finding out what was going on at any time, except what I could see myself.

Some short time after 11 p.m.—I remember the rough time, as I had just previously asked the time of the petty officer telegraphist in the W/T



office—I saw some ships off our starboard beam steaming in the same direction as ourselves. I reported this to the bridge, and receiving no reply, presumed that they were known to be friends. Again a little later I saw the slight glare on the smoke above the funnels of a ship on the starboard beam, but again got no information from the bridge.

At about 11.45 I suddenly saw and heard a salvo of guns fired from some ship or ships to starboard at extremely short range. They were so close that I remember the guns seemed to be firing from some appreciable height above us. At almost the same instant the *Tipperary* shook violently from the impact of being hit by shells. (I was told afterwards that the first salvo hit the bridge, and it must have killed Captain (D) and nearly everyone there.)

I opened fire with the after guns as soon as the enemy opened on us. Proper spotting was out of the question, but crouching behind the canvas screen of my control position (I felt much safer with this thin weather screen between me and the enemy guns, though it wouldn’t have kept out a spent rifle bullet) I yelled at the guns to fire. I don’t think they heard me, but they opened fire all right. During this time both our starboard torpedo tubes were fired, but the enemy were so close that I think that the initial dive which torpedoes usually take as they enter the water made them go under the enemy ships. The enemy’s second salvo hit and burst one of our main steam pipes, and the after-part of the ship was enveloped in a cloud of steam, through which I could see nothing. Losing all their steam, the turbines were brought to a standstill, and we dropped astern out of the action.

The three ships of the enemy that were firing at us could not have fired more than four salvos before they gave us up as done for, and the whole thing had happened so suddenly and was over so quickly that I think we were all quite dazed. Aft we had been hit by only three shells and only a few of the gun crews were wounded, but when the steam cleared away we found that the majority of the men stationed amidships were killed or wounded, including those ratings which had come up from the engine-room and stokeholds, while forward the ship was on fire with flames coming out of the forward coal bunkers, and the bridge alight and an absolute wreck. The only two survivors that I saw afterwards of the people stationed forward were the first lieutenant, who was in the crow’s nest up the foremast and in some miraculous way, in spite of the mast having been shot down, arrived aft, shaken but still alive; and the surgeon probationer, who came aft wounded in the leg.

. . . . .

For about two hours the ship floated in this condition, during which time we employed ourselves getting the wounded aft on to the quarter deck and covering them with officers’ bedding from the cabins, and in putting out two small fires which commenced aft. We also collected all



the confidential books, and placed those not already in steel chests into weighted ammunition boxes, ready to throw overboard in an emergency.

The patience and courage of the wounded was wonderful. On one of my expeditions forward, when I was passing a half-completed little sheet-iron structure which we had been building as an office, I heard a voice say, "Do you think you could have me shifted out of this, sir?" I collected three men, and from the wreck of this shanty we lifted out and carried aft a stoker, badly wounded and apparently paralysed, but quite cheerful. He directed the operation of being got out himself.

At another time our L.T.O. (leading torpedo man), who was doing his best to administer first-aid, called me over and asked, "What can I do with this, sir?" showing me a man with a large portion of his thigh missing. I merely covered the wound up with a large piece of cotton wool and put a blanket over him. "Feels a lot better already, sir," said the wounded man.

We could not cope with the fire forward, it being impossible to get along the upper deck, as the ready supply of ammunition for the forward guns was exploding box by box at short intervals. All the boats were completely smashed, but two life-saving floats which were undamaged were got into the water and kept alongside ready. We threw everything that could possibly catch fire overboard, in the hopes of stopping the fire spreading aft, and I think we got rid of far more things than was necessary, even throwing overboard the upper deck supply of ammunition and the two port torpedoes. Perhaps we did it more to keep ourselves employed and our minds from thinking of the forward magazine, than with any idea of being useful.

### "Tipperary" Sinks, about 2 a.m.

At one time during these two hours some ship opened fire on us for a short time, but luckily she did not hit us. Also two small craft, which we took to be enemy destroyers, closed us, asked who we were, and disappeared again into the dark.

Shortly before 2 a.m. the 1st lieutenant noticed that the ship was going, and gave the order, "Everybody aft." The ship heeled slightly to starboard, then the bows gradually went under. The 1st lieutenant ordered "Everyone for themselves," and we clambered over the side into the sea.

The small Carley float had already left, and I have never heard of it being seen again. Those who were lucky enough to be in time, got on to the large Carley float, the remainder just jumped into the sea. By the time I got to the rails the stern of the ship was well up in the air and the propellers were out of the water, so I slid down a rope on to the port propeller, and thence into the sea.

Unlike most people, I had kept my sea boots on during the last two hours, thinking that I should have plenty of time to take them off when

the moment came, but this I quite forgot to do, and I found myself in the water with my sea boots still on, and only two breaths of air in my life-saving waistcoat.

However, I found no difficulty in kicking the boots off, and the waistcoat was very comfortable for swimming. I started off trying to get clear of the ship as I was afraid of being sucked down by eddies, but could make no headway for some time, probably because I was trying to swim to windward, and it was not until I swam round the stern of the *Tipperary* and pointed down to leeward that I got any distance from her. I heard a commotion behind me, and looking over my shoulder saw the last of the stern just disappearing, so I swam hard for a bit.

I now found myself some distance from the thirty odd other swimmers—amongst whom I noticed Peter, our 1st lieutenant’s white-haired terrier—with the Carley raft further to leeward. As I had little hope of being picked up, I swam slowly away from the others, preferring to drown by myself rather than with a crowd.

After swimming about for what I suppose was an hour, I saw two German pulling boats passing, and soon afterwards heard our men on the raft hailing them. I swam towards the raft, thinking now that there might be a possibility of being saved. As a matter of fact, the Germans passed by without taking any notice. The cold of the water had sort of numbed my brain, and I now had only one idea left—to reach the raft, and I eventually reached it. It was overcrowded, but they pulled me up on to it, an engine-room artificer on one side of me and a red-haired marine on the other side, and I had room to sit on the edge. The raft, supporting about 30 men, was about a foot under water—it’s a hollow, copper, oval-shaped affair, with life-lines and things to hang on by—and as the night drew on a swell got up and the seas washed up and down over our middles, like the waves when one first wades out bathing, only much colder. We sang various popular songs, but I suppose because I had got colder swimming about than the others who had been on the raft all the time, I could not think of the words, and my music was all of one note.

When at last daylight gradually appeared we made out the shape of a small ship, apparently steaming round and round in circles. We were now all in a dull, comatose condition, in which one didn’t care whether one lived or died; so much so that, although the destroyer was only a hundred yards from us, it was very difficult to get anyone to use the paddles and get there. When the men on one side of the raft paddled, the other side stopped, and we simply spun round in a circle. At last an ingenious petty officer, standing up on the board in the centre of the raft, held up a counterpane, and we sort of made sail towards the *Sparrowhawk*—for so we found the ship to be. Eventually we reached her about 5 a.m. and were hauled on board, and though her stern was cut off and her bows also were nearly off just by the bridge, she was Paradise itself to us compared to the Carley raft.



Of the original 32 men who had been on the raft (I think there had been 32), 2 had died and dropped off during the night, and 4 were found to be dead when hauled on board the *Sparrowhawk*. Soon after we arrived on board the bows of the *Sparrowhawk* broke off and floated away, but eventually a destroyer-leader—the *Marksman*—appeared, and after trying to tow the *Sparrowhawk* and finding it impossible, took the crew and ourselves on board her, and sank what was left of the *Sparrowhawk*. We returned in the *Marksman* to Scapa Flow.

The only other survivors of the *Tipperary* of which I have heard, except those picked up with me from the raft, were the Surgeon and I think two ratings, picked up by one of the German boats. They were taken to Holland in a Dutch trawler.

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## Narrative of the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. "Ardent."<sup>1</sup>

### One of the only two Survivors of the Ship.

By about nine o'clock practically all firing had ceased, and the 4th Flotilla took station astern of the battle fleet in two lines, about a mile apart. We were all steaming to the southward towards the Heligoland Bight at about 17 knots. Various firings went on on either side of us, but I could not make out any ships. Once our line eased down for some reason and nearly stopped, when the *Fortune*, which was next astern of me, opened fire from the starboard side, and we clearly saw a submarine on the surface which fired a torpedo at the *Fortune*, but missed. We charged round at the submarine but she disappeared, and we didn't see her again.

It then became evident that the enemy were close at hand. We saw flashes and heard guns all round us, and several destroyers in our line opened fire. Then I clearly perceived four big ships on a nearly parallel but slightly converging course to us, on our starboard quarter. They challenged several times, and their challenge was not an English one. They then switched on their searchlights, picked up the *Fortune*, and opened fire on her. The leaders of my line appeared to increase speed and turn away to port. I could see the *Fortune* was hard hit, so altered round to starboard and fired a torpedo at the leading enemy ship. We could all see it hit most clearly, and there was an enormous upheaval of water right forward. Her foremost lights went out, and she turned away. By this time other searchlights were on us from the second ship, and fire was opened on us, but we got through and away with very little damage. We caught a last glimpse of the *Fortune*, on fire and in a sinking condition, but fighting

<sup>1</sup> This narrative was first printed in the *Britannia Magazine* of the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, Christmas, 1916.



still and firing her guns in a most inspiring manner. The *Fortune* had been in my sub-division for over two years, during which time we had always worked together, and her Captain, Lieut.-Com. F. G. Terry, was in my class in the *Britannia*, and a very great friend of mine. But the *Ardent* was not to survive the *Fortune* for long.

As we got away from this attack I could see that a most desperate action was being fought on our starboard hand, where our other line of destroyers were. A great flame suddenly went up and lit up the sea for a great distance round. This burning ship turned out to be the *Tipperary*, our Captain “D.’s” ship. She burnt a long time.

It was now nearly midnight, and I found myself alone, and so resumed the course of the fleet and increased speed, hoping to pick up the rest of my division. Smoke was reported right ahead, which I thought would be theirs but as I got nearer realised that it was not our flotilla, but a big ship steaming on exactly the opposite course to us. I attacked at once, and from a very close range our remaining torpedoes were fired, but before I could judge of the effect the enemy switched on searchlights and found us at once. I then became aware that the *Ardent* was taking on a division of German battleships. However, we opened fire and ran on at full speed. The next moments were perhaps the most thrilling that anyone could experience. Our guns were useless against such big adversaries; our torpedoes were fired; we could do no more, but wait in the full glare of the blinding searchlights for the shells that could not fail to hit us soon at such close range. There was perfect silence on the bridge, and not a word was spoken. It must only have been seconds, but it seemed like hours. At last it came, and as the first salvo hit I heard a seaman ejaculate almost under his breath, “Oo-oo,” as one does to a bursting rocket. Shell after shell hit us, and our speed diminished and then stopped; then the dynamo stopped, and all the lights went out.

Our three guns that had been barking away like good ’uns ceased firing one by one. I looked on to the forecastle and saw and heard the Captain of the forecastle exhorting the only remaining man of his gun’s crew to “Give them one more,” but that “one more” was never fired, and I saw later both these brave souls stretched out dead. I myself was wounded by almost the first salvo, but felt no great pain or discomfort. The actual feeling when I was struck was as if I had been hit on the thigh with an iron bar, though eventually a piece of shell about as big as my little finger was taken out of me.

The enemy ships suddenly switched off lights and “ceased fire.” I could feel the ship was sinking, and said so to my 1st lieutenant, who also was on the bridge, and told him to get out the boats and rafts, or what might be left of them. I tried to get down the starboard bridge ladder, but that was shot away. The port one was hanging by a shred, and I slid down that. The leading telegraphist came up to me in the quietest and most matter-of-fact way, and asked if he should make any report. I told

him what to make, and he saluted, disappeared, and I never saw him again. The leading signalman came up and said in the most cheerful way, "Well, the old *Ardent* done her bit all right, sir."

The ship was nearly gone, so it only remained for us to try and save as many of the crew as possible.

### H.M.S. "Ardent" Sinks (soon after Midnight).

A terrible scene of destruction and desolation was revealed to me as I walked aft (with some difficulty). All boats were in pieces. The funnels looked more like nutmeg graters. The rafts were blown to bits, and in the ship's side and deck were holes innumerable. In the very still atmosphere, the smoke and steam poured out from the holes in the deck perfectly straight up into the air. Several of my best men came up and tried to console me, and all were delighted that we had at length been in action and done our share. But many were already killed and lay around their guns and places of duty. Most of the engine-room and stokehold brigade must have been killed outright.

I walked right aft and sat down on the ward-room hatch. I could do no more as my leg was very stiff and bleeding a lot. My servant and another seaman, both of whom had been with me over two years, came aft to look for me and to help me. I sent them forward and told them to pass the word for each man to look out for himself. For a moment or two I was quite alone; the smoke cut me off from those further forward, and there was absolute quiet and stillness. Then all of a sudden we were again lit up by searchlights, and the enemy poured in four or five more salvos at point blank range, and then switched off her lights once more. This would be about ten minutes from the time we were first hit.

The *Ardent* gave a big lurch, and I bethought myself of my "Gieve" waistcoat. I blew and blew without any result whatever, and found that it had been shot through. Another lurch, and the ship heeled right over, and threw me to the ship's side. I could feel she was going, so I flopped over into the sea, grabbing a lifebuoy that was providentially at hand. The *Ardent's* stern kept up a few moments, then she slowly sank from view. As the smoke and steam cleared off I could see many heads in the water—about forty or fifty I should think. There was no support beyond life-belts, lifebuoys, and floating waistcoats, so I was afraid that few of us could possibly survive, especially as I realised that all the destroyers had gone on, and that no big ship would dare to stop, even if they saw us in the water.

I spoke to many men, and saw most of them die one by one. Not a man of them showed any fear of death, and there was not a murmur, complaint, or cry for help from a single soul. Their joy was, and they talked about it to the end, that they and the *Ardent* had "done their bit" as they put it. While there were still many alive, a German came close and



fired a star-shell over us. I could see her distinctly, and was all for giving her a hail, but the men all said “No”; they would sooner take the remote chance of being saved by an English ship than be a prisoner in Germany. I was nearly done-in once or twice in the first hour by men hanging on to me in the last stages of exhaustion, and I was separated from my lifebuoy and was pulled right over in the water, but managed to recover myself and the buoy. None of the men appeared to suffer at all; they just seemed to lie back and go to sleep.

After a long weary while the sun came up, and then I was feeling much more comfortable than two hours previously. I found a skiff’s oar floating past, and put it under my arms. I began to feel very drowsy, and dropped off into a sort of sleep several times, only to be awakened again by waves slapping into my face. There was quite a swell, but the surface of the water was smooth, owing to the masses of oil floating about from sunken ships. I woke again, after what I felt to be a long time, to hear a shout, and could see ships a long way off. I took a sort of detached interest in them, heard and gave an answering shout to “Stick it, *Ardent’s*!” to someone in the water near by, but whom I could not see, and watched the ships disappear again without much interest, and dozed off again.

Once more I woke to find a flotilla leader—the *Marksman*—close alongside me. I sang out for help, and in reply got a welcome and reassuring shout, “You’re all right, sir; we’re coming,” and once again relapsed into unconsciousness, and have no recollection at all of being actually got on board. The time I was picked up was just after six o’clock.

I began to take an interest in the outside world again about 7.30, and from that moment, with the exception, of course, of my leg, which was very stiff and painful, and also a few odd scratches and cuts, I felt absolutely no ill effects whatsoever from my long period in the sea. We had rather a rough passage back, but they were very kind to me in the *Marksman*. I got quite a start once when the forecastle guns right over my head opened fire, but I got a reassuring message the same moment from the Captain to say that they weren’t in action, only sinking the *Sparrowhawk*, which had been so badly damaged in collision that it was impossible to tow her back. I was placed on board the hospital ship *China* on June 2nd, and was operated on that night.

. . . . .

I could not finish a narrative like this without a word about my crew. They were really a splendid lot, and all through the long, weary months of waiting they were as cheery and contented as possible. I always felt that their great spirits, confidence, and the alacrity with which they tackled every job was a much greater source of inspiration and help to me than anything I did was to them. I was lucky, too in my officers. The 1st



About 12.30 a.m. to 7.0 a.m.

Narrative of a Survivor of H.M.S. "Ardent."

lieutenant, Lieut. Egan, on that last great night, was calmness personified. The torpedo-gunner (Mr. Livermore) seemed almost as much pleased that his torpedo, which scored the first hit, hadn't "broken surface" (a great matter for professional pride with gunners (T)) as that it had hit. The artificer engineer and his staff did just what was wanted, and faithfully fulfilled every order from the bridge till death overtook them. All hands fought the ship with the utmost gallantry, and in a most tenacious and determined manner, till she sank beneath them, and then met their death in that composed and happy spirit that I am convinced comes to all those who do their duty to the end. May they rest in peace.



## Chapter XIII.



### OTHER INCIDENTS OF THE NIGHT.



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## CHAPTER XIII.

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### Other Incidents of the Night.

Two Actions of H.M.S. "Castor," about 10.04 p.m. and 12.15 a.m. ;

Loss of H.M.S. "Turbulent," about 12.25 a.m.

*The three most fiercely fought actions during the night of Jutland were those of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, of "Tipperary's" (4th) Flotilla, and of the 12th Flotilla at daybreak.*

*But in addition to these three actions certain other engagements with enemy ships did occur, notably those of the "Castor" and of the 13th Destroyer Flotilla. In the latter action one of our destroyers, the "Turbulent," was lost with all hands. During H.M.S. "Castor's" two engagements at about 10 p.m., and again at about 12.15 a.m., she was in company with and leading some boats of the 11th Destroyer Flotilla, but she seems to have been the only ship actively engaged with the enemy, although in the first engagement torpedoes were fired by some of the destroyers, which it was hoped may have caused damage or loss to the enemy. In the second engagement, the "Castor's" think that they sank a German destroyer by gunfire at point-blank range:—*

*"At about 12.15 a.m. I sighted a torpedo boat on the starboard bow. As soon as it was distinguished as an enemy craft 'Castor' turned to ram and opened fire. The torpedo boat was too quick on the helm, and just avoided being rammed, but received the fire of all guns at point-blank range and was not seen again. A flare, probably from shell explosions, was seen on her deck aft.*

*"Believing her to be sunk, 'Castor' turned again to South to follow the fleet.*

*"There would appear to be no doubt that she was sunk as she was not seen by any of the destroyers who passed the spot where she was fired on by 'Castor.'"*

*[Official Despatch of H.M.S. "Castor."]*

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### Narrative of H.M.S. "Marne," of 11th Destroyer Flotilla,

*In Company with H.M.S. "Castor."*

After dark the 11th Flotilla took up night cruising stations, and shaped a course to the southward at 17 knots.

About 10.30 p.m., what appeared to be three light cruisers were sighted about 1,500 yards away on the starboard beam. Before they could be identified as friend or foe, they had switched on searchlights and opened



fire on the flotilla with every available gun. Apparently *Marne* was the first ship they made out in the darkness. Telegraphs were put to "Full speed ahead," but for some reason unknown there was a temporary stoppage and the ship lost her way—most fortunate as it happened, for it caused all the enemy's salvoes to fall in the water just ahead of us. Everyone on the bridge thought that we had been hit aft, but our stoppage apparently was only due to a hang up in the signals to the engine-room. *Castor* then came up between *Marne* and the enemy, incurring a heavy gruellling herself, but probably saving *Marne*. One hit that the enemy scored on *Castor* set one of her boats afire, and, burning fiercely, it lit up the whole ship. She was a most impressive sight, racing along past us with this fire in her and at the same time engaging the enemy with her starboard broadside.

Fortunately *Marne's* stopping was only momentary, and we then darted ahead again. *Castor* drew clear, and she and *Marne* and *Magic* each discharged torpedoes. One of these must have found its target, for an explosion occurred among the enemy ships. The hostile vessels then extinguished their lights, and nothing more of them was either seen or heard. The gun-flashes and the searchlights had been so intensely glaring during this short action, that for some few minutes after firing ceased one felt almost completely blind in the ordinary darkness. *Marne* had a lucky escape in this skirmish, as most of the enemy shells fell ahead of her and only one 4-inch struck her, and that one aft without exploding.

All night long gun-flashes were visible. A burning vessel was in sight for quite a long time, believed to have been *Tipperary*. Later a terrific explosion occurred, undoubtedly some capital ship (? *Lutzow* or *Black Prince*) blowing up.

Dawn found *Marne* still with her flotilla, and she took station 5 miles on the starboard beam of *Castor*. A British light cruiser, most likely *Dublin*, was met and she asked her position as all her own records had been shot away. *Marne* joined up with the main body of the Grand Fleet about 8 a.m., and eventually returned to base without further incident.

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## Loss of H.M.S. "Turbulent."

About 12.25 a.m.

*Continuation of the narrative of H.M.S. "Petard," destroyer of the 13th Flotilla, after that flotilla's torpedo attack on the German battle cruisers at about 5 p.m., during the battle cruiser run to the north (see Phase I., page 30).*

. . . At 0.15 a.m. our flotilla's course was altered from south to south-west by west. At 0.25 we sighted a dark mass about 5 or 6 points on our

starboard bow, steering S.E. about 600 yards away. On looking at her closely there could be no doubt at all what she was, as at the angle we sighted her at we could see clearly large crane derricks silhouetted against the sky, and only German ships have these fittings. At the same moment the German battleships switched on recognition lights, consisting of two red lights over a white one.

As *Petard* had fired all her torpedoes in the day attack, there was nothing we could do but get away, so we increased to full speed and altered course about a point to port to clear the enemy's stem.

As soon as we had passed ahead of her she switched her foremost group of searchlights on to us, but they just missed our stern on being switched on, though they were trained round to the right directly, and then illuminated us perfectly. Immediately afterwards we saw the flashes of the enemy's secondary armament being fired, and on the bridge we felt the ship tremble slightly, and guessed we had been hit aft. They seemed to give us another salvo, and then the second ship in the line—we could now see four—also joined in; this second salvo struck us further forward in the ship, but luckily missed the bridge and the midship guns' crew.

At this moment the foremost group of German searchlights were switched off us and trained round to port all together on to the *Turbulent*, my next astern. Immediately afterwards, according to the evidence of some of my ship's company aft, she was rammed and sunk by this leading German battleship, but I personally did not see this. We escaped without any further incident.<sup>1</sup>

*Petard* had been hit six times. One shot penetrated the roof of No. 2 stokehold and cut an oil fuel pipe, setting this oil alight so that it

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from Narrative of H.M.S. "Nicator," also of 13th Flotilla.

Some time after midnight, I cannot remember the exact time, the signal to alter course to S.W. came. For some time there had been a long lull between these intermittent bursts of firing, which we took to be a flotilla attacking, when suddenly we saw challenging going on, and some ship, I do not know which, switched on its fighting lights for a second or two and then off again, apparently by accident. Then without any warning searchlights were switched on abaft our starboard beam, and settled on the *Petard*, ahead of us. We saw three or four big ships, obviously Germans, silhouetted for a moment; then a burst of fire, followed quickly by another, and the light went out. The *Petard* was badly hit, and suffered a lot of casualties. Then all lights switched on again, this time on us for a fraction of a minute during which time we thought we were in for it too, but they trained aft on to the *Turbulent*, two ships astern of us and as far as I can remember, the tail of the line of destroyers. She appeared to be at absolutely point-blank range, and in a few seconds a ripple of fire seemed



flared up out of the shell hole and lit up the whole ship perfectly. Luckily, the engine-room department were able to shut off the oil to the broken pipe and extinguish the fire in a few minutes. The enemy's first salvo had hit the after part of the ship, and had killed or severely wounded the whole of the officers and crew of the after 4-inch gun; this salvo also wrecked all the officers' cabins, and unfortunately killed the Surgeon probationer just at the moment when his services were most required.

That was all we saw of Jutland, as having one boiler disabled and being short of oil, we were detached with *Nicator* to return to Rosyth at 6.30 a.m. However, we were not quite free of the Germans yet, for about 4.0 p.m. on June 1st, just as we made the coast off the Farne Islands, we were attacked by a German submarine. But the torpedo missed, passing between the two destroyers, and apparently sank and exploded on the bottom of the sea, as we all felt a heavy explosion immediately afterwards.

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### The Battle Fleet during the Night.

*During the night the Battle Fleet continuously saw astern of them, to the northward, the outward signs of fighting—searchlights, gun flashes, and explosions—but they did not themselves come into action.*

*“During the night we remained at our action stations expecting every moment to be attacked by destroyers, but no exciting incident occurred with the exception of various alarms and many indications that other portions of the Fleet were not having such a peaceful time as we were.”*

[Narrative of H.M.S. “Lion.”]

*“During the first watch there was quite a lot of firing going on on our starboard quarter (i.e., to the north-east), and a cruiser seemed to be on fire pretty badly, searchlight beams apparently from her that showed in our*

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#### Extract from Narrative of H.M.S. “Nicator” (Continued).

to run the whole length of her. It looked as if she were blown right out of the water. It all happened so suddenly that we hardly realised what was taking place, and it somehow did not strike us that this was the German fleet breaking through the line, unluckily at the weakest point, just between the battle fleet and battle cruisers. When daylight came we sent our surgeon probationer on board the *Petard*, as their surgeon had been killed with the first salvo. With only a destroyer's medical outfit and no anæsthetics he performed wonders, and undoubtedly saved a number of lives.



Narrative from H.M.S. "Malaya."

*"direction being turned quite red by the flames. At about 11.40 there was further firing astern and for the first hour or so of the middle watch there was intermittent firing on the port quarter; but otherwise the night passed without incident."*

[Narrative of H.M.S. "Bellerophon," 1st Battle Squadron.]

*" . . . At about 10 p.m. searchlights . . . rose and fell, turned and twisted, and finally fixed their light on a group of destroyers. Fascinated, we watched the destroyers rushing up the bright paths of light. . . . White splashes gleamed all round them, and then a great red lurid stain started in one of the attacking craft and spread to a great explosion of fierce, white flame. . . ."*

[Narrative of H.M.S. "Southampton."]

Extract from the  
Narrative of a Turret Officer, H.M.S. "Malaya"  
(5th Battle Squadron).

. . . We steamed south during the night, which was full of incident. Officers and men remained at their action stations, for the enemy were very near, and close action might be expected at any moment. About 9.0 p.m. I remembered that I had not eaten for some time, and was very glad of a sandwich of tinned salmon which was served out—nothing warm could be obtained as the galley was out of action. The men managed to get a little sleep during the night, but I was not so fortunate, my perch not being very comfortable. Also, I hardly dared sleep, for it seemed so necessary to be absolutely ready.

We heard and saw several destroyers' attacks on the Germans. One especially we had an extremely close view of, some of the German shells fired at our destroyers actually falling around us. I have a very vivid impression of those destroyers dashing into the blinding searchlights and star shells, and into a perfectly furious fire. The leading boat was hit badly, and was soon ablaze stem to stern. The others seemed to make good their escape after having fired their torpedoes. On this occasion, as during other attacks, we heard and felt heavy explosions, as though a torpedo had hit, and one ship was actually seen to sink. One of the explosions lit up the whole sky.

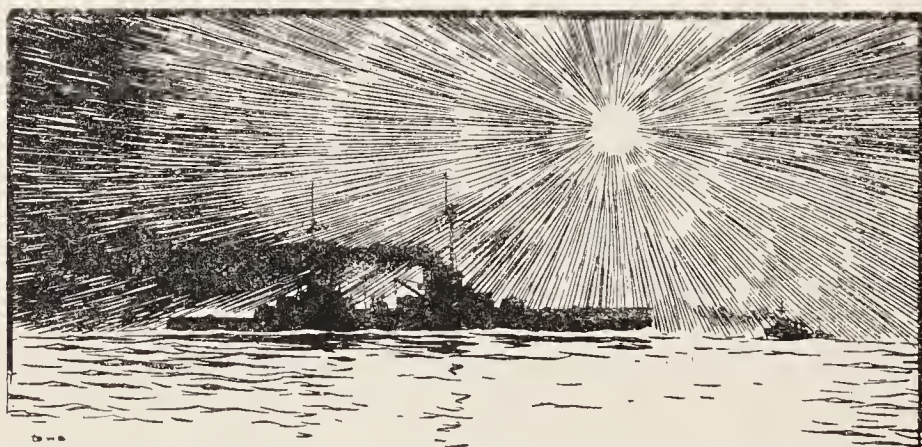
It seemed absolutely impossible to know what was going on all around us, and where was friend and where was foe. But as so much was happening we thought it absolutely certain that we should meet in the morning. It is not easy to express our feeling when with dawn dawn came the mist; we could see no more than 2 miles, and not a German was in sight. We cruised about

### Chap. XIII.—Other Incidents of the Night.

until nearly noon, hoping against hope that the weather would clear and allow us to complete yesterday's work. At noon I was not sorry to be able to get out of my turret for lunch, for I had had no rest and no food for the last 24 hours, and I was quite ready for both. The next and most trying duty was to discover the casualties of my division, which had suffered heavily. The majority of the wounded were unconscious, for they had been dreadfully burnt, but those to whom I spoke only wanted one to write to their people saying that all was going well, and to know about the action. Several of them afterwards died.

At 8 p.m., June 1st, the most mutilated of the dead were buried at sea.

I need hardly say that the behaviour of the men was perfectly splendid. From the shell-room to the gun-house and "control cabinet," they all did their jobs with the utmost cheeriness, often under very uncomfortable conditions. They could feel the ship being hit and take up an unpleasant list, but they had no other thought than to keep the guns going and thereby eventually to annihilate the whole German fleet.



GERMAN STAR SHELL SHOWING UP A NIGHT ATTACK.

## Chapter XIV.



### 12th FLOTILLA ATTACK AT DAYBREAK.



Narratives from

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H.M.S. <i>Obedient</i> , leading 1st Division, - -	207
H.M.S. <i>Maenad</i> , leading 2nd Division, - -	209



## CHAPTER XIV.

### 12th Flotilla Attack at Daybreak.

*The torpedo attack carried out by the 12th Destroyer Flotilla upon a German battle squadron at daybreak (approximately 2 a.m.) on June 1st was one of the most successful enterprises of the Battle of Jutland. It resulted in one German battleship being sunk and another one being hit and badly damaged, whilst the attacking flotilla escaped without the loss of any ship, and received material damage to only one destroyer, H.M.S. "Onslaught," whose Captain and 1st lieutenant were killed.*

*The British ships present in the attack were the flotilla leader, H.M.S. "Faulknor," and eight destroyers—"Obedient," "Mindful," "Marvel," and "Onslaught"; "Maenad," "Noble," "Nessus," and "Narwhal."*

*The following is a brief account of the attack itself, taken from the narrative of H.M.S. "Faulknor," the flotilla leader:—*

*"The Captain gave orders for the torpedoes to be fired as the sights came on, and at 2 a.m. turned on to a parallel and opposite course to the Germans. At two minutes past 2 the 'Faulknor' fired her first torpedo, which probably passed ahead of the second enemy ship.*

*"About two minutes later the second torpedo was fired, but almost simultaneously with this the Germans sighted our flotilla and all their battleships opened fire together with the light cruisers astern of their line, which poured in a particularly heavy fire on us. The sea seemed to be alive with bursting shells and the air with the whistle of passing projectiles. The range was if anything under 1,500 yards, and 'overs' much predominated. Suddenly a huge explosion took place in the third German ship, and with a deafening noise and shock she seemed first of all to open out, then to close together, then to go. Evidently somebody's torpedo had hit, but as explosions were taking place all round from bursting shells and guns were firing, a torpedo explosion was almost impossible to distinguish until the ship herself blew up. But when this did happen, even amidst the inferno that was going on, the explosion stood out alone, and we knew that our attack had at least done for one German big ship. Our own small 4-inch guns were firing right royally against I do not know how many inches of armour, but at point-blank range, so I hope that they strafed a few Huns."*

*The report of the attack made by the Commander-in-Chief in his despatch was as follows:—*

*"(Para. 23). The attack carried out by the 12th Flotilla (Captain Anselan J. B. Stirling) was admirably executed. The [German] squadron attacked, which consisted of six large vessels besides light cruisers, comprised vessels*



"POMMERN" STARTING TO BLOW UP.

TORPEDOING OF "POMMERN" AT DAWN.

*From a Painting.]*

12TH FLOTILLA DESTROYERS ATTACKING.

*[To face page 206.]*





"of the 'Kaiser' class [dreadnought battleships], and were almost completely surprised. A large number of torpedoes was fired, including some at the second and third ships in the line; those fired at the third ship took effect, and she was observed to blow up. A second attack, made twenty minutes later by 'Maenad' (Commander John T. Champion) on the five vessels still remaining, resulted in the second ship in the line being also hit and blown up.<sup>1</sup>

"The destroyers were under a heavy fire from the light cruisers on reaching the rear of the line, but 'Onslaught' was the only vessel which received any material injuries. In 'Onslaught,' Sub-lieutenant Harry W. A. Kemmis, assisted by Midshipman Reginald G. Arnot, R.N.R., the only executive officers not disabled, brought the ship successfully out of action and reached Rosyth."

## Narrative of H.M.S. "Obedient"

(Leading Ship of 1st Division).

BY AN OFFICER ON HER BRIDGE.

About 10.30 p.m. *Champion* and four destroyers appeared on our starboard beam, and whilst there heavy firing took place in that direction, many shells falling close to the flotilla. A ship, too, was seen to be on fire in the same direction. At 11.20 p.m. there was further heavy firing on the starboard bow, and three big explosions were seen, and again a ship was seen to be on fire, which continued to burn for a long while; in fact, could still be seen astern for a full hour later, although below the horizon.

At 12.10 a.m. the flotilla was subjected to heavy gunfire from the direction of the starboard beam, which necessitated altering course to east, and later to north-east, before resuming our southerly course at 12.30 a.m.

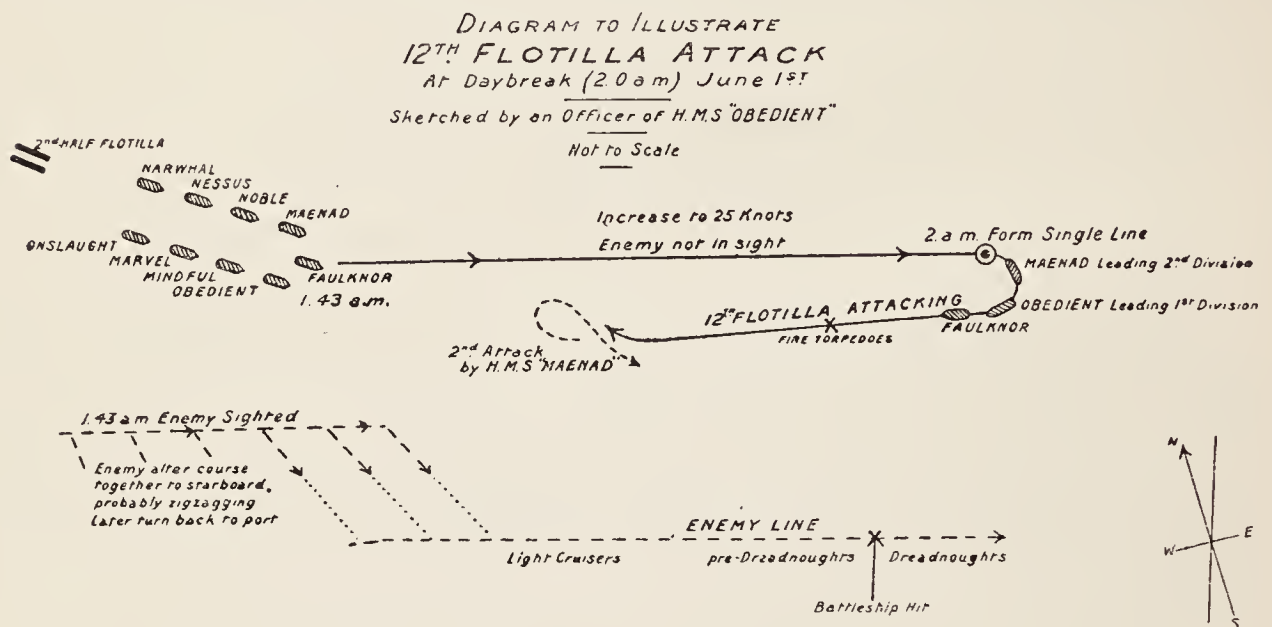
Just about an hour later, at 1.43 a.m. as daylight was appearing, a line of ships were sighted on our starboard beam, steering apparently a parallel course to us, about east-south-east. Owing to the mist we could not at once determine whether they were enemy ships or not, but our doubts were very soon dispelled by one of them challenging us. She flashed the letter "K" in morse code, but this was not the correct challenge for the night, so obviously the ships were Germans.

We were the division nearest to the enemy, and at first we thought that Captain (D) in *Faulknor* was not aware of them, and so ran alongside his ship to tell him of them by megaphone. Our Captain then decided to attack with our division, and we altered course to starboard to do so, but just afterwards we observed that the enemy had turned away together about 6 points (67 degrees), and, as we noticed that our flotilla had increased

<sup>1</sup> Probably this ship did not sink.

speed to prepare for an attack, we turned back to rejoin the *Faulknor*. By the time we had rejoined she had increased to 25 knots, and holding on to her course until 2.0 a.m., then altered course 16 points to starboard (180 degrees), and we, with our division, took station astern of her.

The enemy were now clearly visible on our port side, dreadnought battleships leading and pre-dreadnoughts following, a long line of them. Conditions were nearly ideal for an attack as it was too light for search-lights to be of much use to the enemy big ships, and yet, with the mist as an added cloak, it was sufficiently dark to make the laying of guns on fast-moving targets difficult. The *Faulknor* led the flotilla into attack.



It is difficult to write clearly of the details of the attack, for one was too busy at the time to take note of what was happening all around. One only watched the enemy ships come looming up out of the mist at regular intervals apart and momentarily expected to see the flash of their guns break out. At 2.05 a.m. we fired our first torpedo, being then abreast what appeared to be the fourth ship of their line, at a range of about 2,000 to 3,000 yards. At the same moment fire was opened upon us from all the enemy ships visible and with all calibres of guns, turrets and secondary (5.9-inch) guns. This fire was very accurate; indeed, so accurate as to save us, for salvo after salvo fell within a 50-yard circle of us, and many of our guns' crews were drenched by the splashes, yet no shell hit us.

Just as it seemed that we must be hit, and when we thought our torpedo must have missed, there came our reward. Right amidships on the water-line of the ship that we had fired at—the *Pommern*, now on our port quarter—appeared a dull red ball of fire. Quicker than one can imagine it spread fore and aft, until reaching the foremast and mainmast it flared upwards, up the masts in big red tongues of flame, uniting between the mastheads in



a big, black cloud of smoke and sparks. Then one saw the ends of the ship come up as though her back was broken, before the mist shut her out from view. In the silence that followed, a voice on our bridge was heard to say, "Pity the poor devils, they ain't drawn their month's money."

A heavy fire continued to be directed at us, and the *Nessus* and *Onslaught* astern were hit. We increased to full speed and commenced to zig-zag, which undoubtedly saved us from being hit. Further torpedoes were fired at the enemy line, but nothing could be seen of the result owing to our speed and the mist which quickly shut out the ships, now on our quarter, from view.

During the rest of the morning nothing further was seen of the enemy, except that after we had joined up with part of the 1st B.S. (*Revenge*, *Agincourt*, and *Hercules*), at about 4 a.m., a Zeppelin was sighted. All ships fired at her with guns ranging from 15-inch turrets to 303-inch Maxims.

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## Narrative from H.M.S. "Maenad"

(Leading Ship of the 2nd Division of 12th Flotilla).

After this engagement was over (an action on our starboard quarter about midnight), we had practically two hours during which nothing of interest that I can remember occurred. We were steaming on various courses between south and east at 17 to 18 knots. That was from midnight till 1.55 a.m. I was aft at my gun at this time and had nothing to do; one smoked a good deal and dozed occasionally.

At 1.55 we altered course to South 30° East, went on to 25 knots, and the word was passed to close up properly at action stations. Our flotilla leader, the *Faulknor*, had sighted some German heavy ships, and turned so as to steer in the same direction as them, to get ahead of them. Things then got very exciting as we left the German ships and lost sight of them, while we took up a position for attack, knowing that in a few minutes we should turn and go straight for them from ahead.

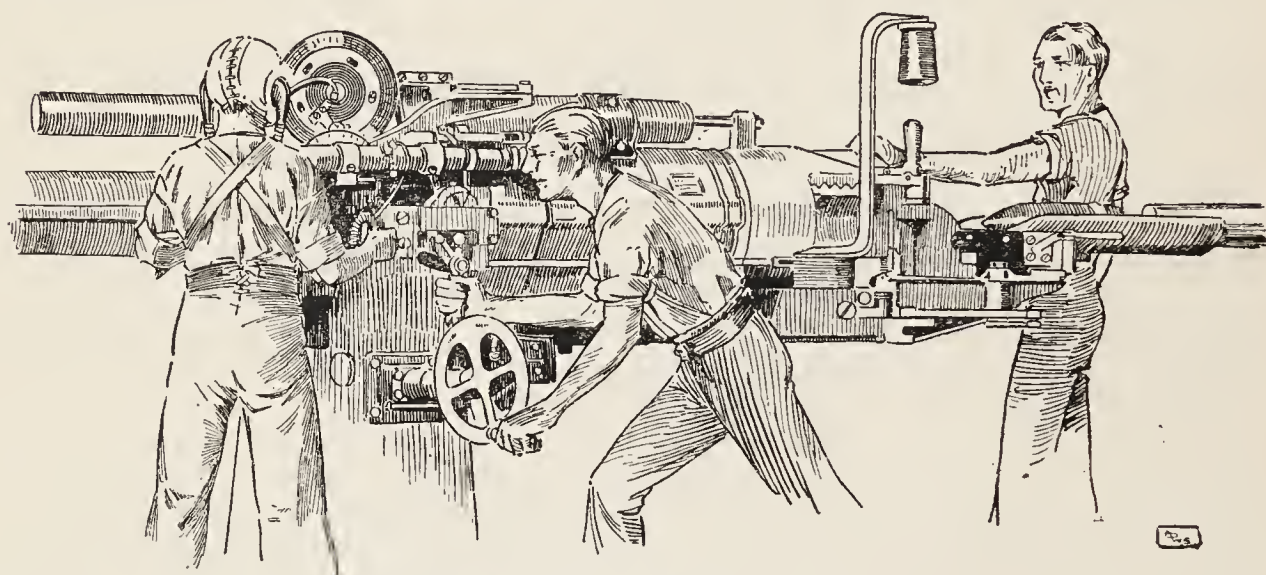
At about 2.15 a.m. we turned, and everyone was at pretty high tension waiting to sight the Germans as they appeared out of the haze. At 2.20 we sighted them and attacked. As soon as the attack started, one lost all sense of excitement, because things were *happening*. The Germans opened a fairly heavy fire on all of us, and right at the beginning hit the *Onslaught*, which was quite close to us. We fired one torpedo at a German battleship of the *König* class about 4,000 yards off, but I do not know whether we hit. One torpedo from the flotilla certainly found a mark. The whole attack only lasted about five minutes, by which time we had passed this division of German ships and lost sight of them.

After the attack our Captain, having only had time to fire one torpedo, decided to attack again, so he turned and left the flotilla, increased to full



speed and off we went after the Germans. It did not take long to find them and at 2.28—only 8 minutes after the first attack—we sighted them again and fired two torpedoes. During this and the previous attack there had been nothing for the guns' crews to do, and, as they were very keen, I opened fire with the after gun at a German battleship; rather ridiculous to fire against their armour with 4-inch shells, but it gave us a lot of satisfaction, particularly as the gun-layer swore he saw some shell explode on their superstructure. I'm afraid, however, that this firing rather disconcerted the Captain, as he thought it was our ship being hit aft instead of our gun firing.

Just before we turned away and lost sight of the Germans we had the satisfaction of seeing one of our torpedoes take effect on one of the Germans, and a most splendid explosion resulted, sending a flame well up to her masthead. At the time we, of course, thought she would sink, but unfortunately we found out later that they got her back into harbour.



“READY!” (4-in. gun's crew).

When that was over we turned away and found ourselves alone, not far from the Horn's Reef light vessel, roughly 20 to 30 miles S.W. of it. At 2.45 we turned to the northward, hoping to run across our flotilla again. We saw no sign of them, but met two of the 13th, the *Rosyth* Flotilla, *Moresby* and *Obdurate* I think they were, so joined up with them. A little later we picked up *Marksman*, our flotilla half-leader, and then *Champion*, the light cruiser carrying Captain “D.” 13. We all joined up and formed a small detached squadron of our own. We steamed to the north and north-west, but saw nothing until 3.30, when we sighted two German destroyers on our starboard bow; we opened fire on them, and they fired several torpedoes at us, neither side scoring any hits. They were quickly lost in the haze and we did not follow them up, as we sighted in the distance a large ship screened by many more destroyers, and we had not sufficient torpedoes left to make an attack.

This action only lasted ten minutes, and at 3.40 we altered to N.N.W., and were on that course until 5 o'clock, when we ran into a lot of oil and wreckage. We also saw many dead bodies bobbing about, but could not tell what nationality they were. We stopped by the wreck of one ship to search for any survivors, and the *Marksman* found one, the Captain of the *Ardent*—I believe he was practically the only survivor of his ship. He had been in the water five hours, and was nearly done for. After a good search for any other survivors we went on, and shortly afterwards sighted some survivors on a "Carley" raft. These belonged to the *Fortune*. Just as we were getting near to pick them up we sighted a submarine's periscope, and then a torpedo passed just under our stern, so we left the raft and steamed round and round at high speed for a short time, and then stopped to pick up the men. We got eleven on board us, and one of the other destroyers got a few more. Unfortunately one of our survivors died after being on board a short time. I enquired of our survivors about the 1st Lieutenant of the *Fortune*, Lieut. R. E. Paterson, whom I knew very well, and gathered he had last been seen swimming away from an overloaded raft, so as to give the other men a chance. He was never seen again.

At 5.45 we proceeded and steered north, and were on this course or roughly so until 8 a.m. During this time I took the opportunity of getting a little sleep, and I think most of the others on board did so too. We were all tired out, and unless there was some immediate work to busy oneself about, one could hardly keep one's eyes open.

We sighted the disabled *Sparrowhawk*, and the *Marksman* was detached to stand by her, but after trying to tow her stern first *Marksman* eventually had to give it up, remove the crew, and sink the ship.

The remainder of us spread out in line abreast to make a wide sweep, and so sight any straggling ships, wreckage, survivors, etc. At 8.0 a.m. we altered to south again to make a further sweep. I got some breakfast then and went on the bridge to keep the forenoon watch. We realised that there now seemed little chance of seeing the Germans again.

At 9.0 we altered to S.E., and at 10 back again to N.W., having sighted nothing. I was alone most of the time on the bridge, and my mind wandered back over the happenings of the last 12 hours, but the details I cannot remember, as I was half-asleep most of the time. We carried on our sweep up the battle ground of the previous day, but saw nothing. The other two destroyers with us were sent back to Rosyth in the forenoon, as they were getting short of oil, which left ourselves and the *Champion* to go on. We swept up towards the entrance of the Skaggerack, and at about 3.30 in the afternoon turned to west, our course for the Firth of Forth.

We arrived in the Forth at about 4 p.m. on the 2nd of June, filled up with oil, took in ammunition, torpedoes, and provisions, and were ready to go out again by 8 p.m.



DAWN, JUNE 1st.

## THE RETURN TO HARBOUR.

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*There are now left few incidents of Jutland which have not been already described by some eye-witness in the British fleet. It remains only to speak of the aftermath of the battle and—one cannot help it—of the bitter disappointment of that dawn of June the 1st, 1916, when the German fleet was found to have escaped to its harbours.*

*The dawn broke grey and misty, and very slowly to the British fleet. It relieved the strain of the night, but it brought with it nothing else of satisfaction. Concentrated, intact except for two battleships (the “Warspite” and “Marlborough”), and practically undiminished in fighting power, the British fleet could anticipate a renewal of the action with reasonable confidence. It had appeared to them overnight that they had the full measure of their opponents, and given a full day’s daylight they could expect victory, a complete victory, worthy of their standards.*

*So at 2.47 a.m. on June 1st the Battle Fleet turned to the north, sent out the light forces ahead and on the wings to gain touch with the enemy, and the crews of the fleet, though tired after the strained watching and waiting of the night, closed up with eagerness at their action stations, making all those little final preparations which, after long waiting, one makes when the moment of the test approaches. But there was to be no test. June 1st was to bring only a maturing disappointment, a gradual realisation that, as the dawn widened to day and the full visibility gave no more concessions to hope than had the first streaks of morning light, that there was to be no completion of yesterday’s work. As no reports came from the scouts spread ahead and on the flank, as no fresh ships were sighted except an occasional British straggler rejoining the fleet after being separated during the night, as nothing but the familiar silhouettes of our own ships could be seen on either hand, gradually*



it was borne home to the British fleet that the Battle of Jutland was finished. The scouting forces could find no enemy ships about, no sign of the German battle fleet, for the German battle fleet were past them, to the eastward of them, making their way down the swept channel off Schleswig Holstein towards Cuxhaven. Only two or three straggling German light craft were sighted in the very early hours of the morning, and they quickly disappeared into the mist, and after that no other surface ship was seen, only a Zeppelin which was fired upon, but not hit.

One can appreciate the feelings of the fleet at dawn from the narrative of the midshipman in the foretop of the battleship "Neptune":—

"At about ten minutes to midnight a messenger came into the gun-room looking as dirty and weird as a traveller from the infernal regions, to report that all hands would go to action stations again at 2 a.m. At 2 a.m. we were all back at our action stations, the same lot of us in the top as yesterday.

"Shortly before three we heard heavy firing to the eastward. The visibility was quite good, and gave promise of a better day; we had plenty of ammunition left, and felt that, given the chance, we could make short work of what remained of the enemy. Was this the chance? All quarters were warned. The guns had been left loaded all night, and were as ready as we were to start again.

"The silhouette of our battle cruisers became faintly visible, but there was no sign of the enemy. We searched the horizon all round with glasses, hoping to find some target, but there was nothing.

"About 3 a.m. a Zeppelin suddenly appeared out of the morning haze, and steered towards us until the ensign trailing from its car could be seen. I had never seen a Zeppelin before, and regarded it curiously. An order was passed to 'X' turret to fire one round at it at maximum elevation. Our next ahead fired a whole salvo, and other ships started in. Our round went off, and for a brief second I could see the projectile in the air, but then the airship lifted its nose disdainfully to the morning breeze and disappeared to the south-westward, and a signal was received ordering us not to waste ammunition. Not until the Zeppelin was out of sight did I realise the full significance of this early morning visit. It meant that the Germans now knew exactly where we were; we should not see the High Seas Fleet that day."

The British fleet turned to the north at 2.47 a.m., and swept up and down over their track of the night and over the area of yesterday's fleet action, until 1.15 p.m., but no enemy ships were to be found. There were relics of the fight. Patches of oil, with in the centre some wreckage or even the bows of a ship still sticking up, and floating bodies around. It was even possible in a very few cases to rescue a man here or there from the wreckage still alive, but very few were these, for the cold of the North Sea waters is soon numbing in its effect, and humans floating in it mercifully soon lose their senses, become drowsy, and then drown. "None of the men appeared to suffer at all; they just seemed to lie back and go to sleep."

Where "Tipperary's" flotilla had fought in the night the patches of wreckage were frequent. "During the two or three hours succeeding daylight we passed through large quantities of floating wreckage, hammocks, bodies, etc. An alert signalman reported he saw a hand waving from a spar some distance away, and on closing we were fortunately able to rescue a stoker belonging to the 'Tipperary,' who informed us that his ship had been sunk some four or five hours previously. . . ."

"Later in the morning we found the disabled 'Sparrowhawk,' or rather what remained of her, as she had been cut in two. . . ."

(Narrative of H.M.S. "Dublin.")

"Then followed a day of search, while we sat and dozed at our stations, and the only signs of the enemy were hundreds of their drowned blue-jackets in their life-saving waistcoats, floating near the great smears of oil and wreckage that marked the grave of some ship, with also large numbers of dead fish floating near these patches of wreckage, apparently killed by the explosion."

"At 6.0 p.m. on June 1st we dispersed from action stations, went into cruising stations, and returned to our base."

(Narrative of H.M.S. "New Zealand.")

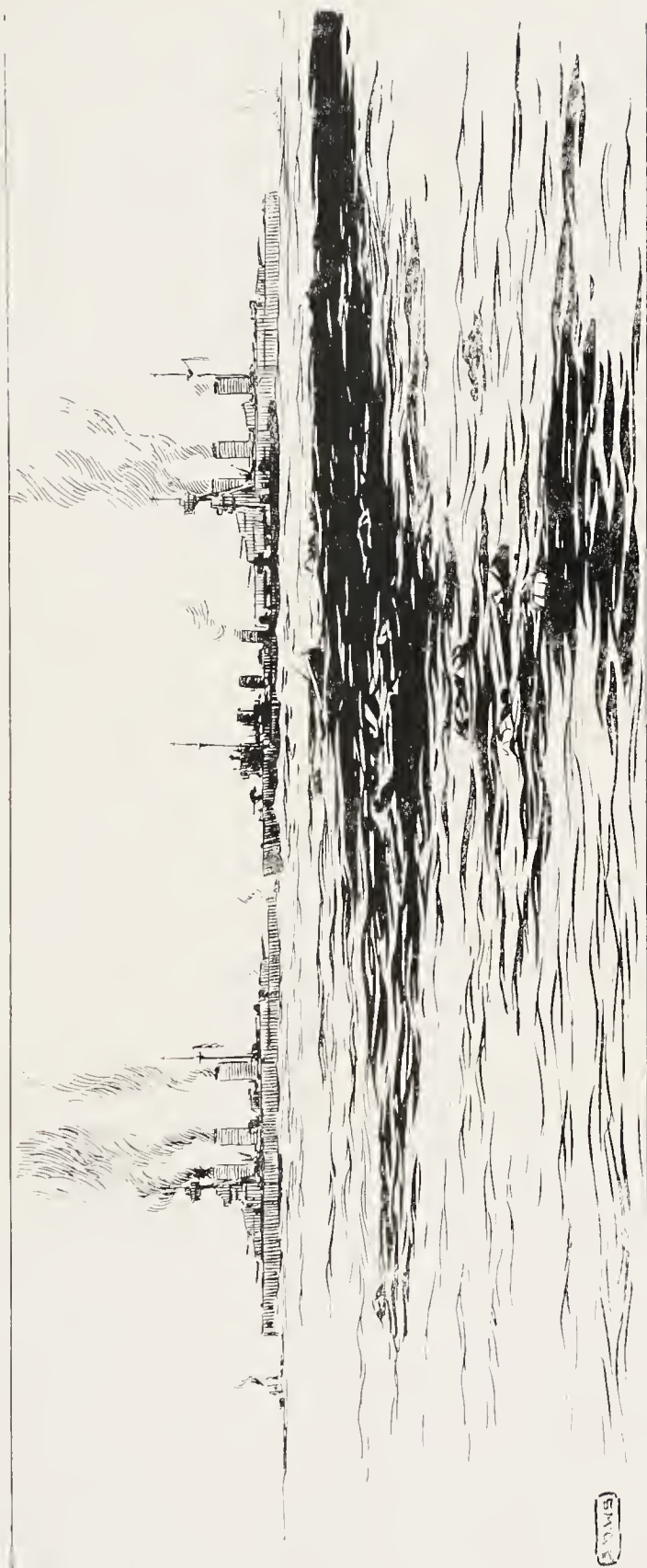
So the battle fleet gave up the search for the enemy at 1.15 p.m., "being reluctantly forced to the conclusion that they had regained their bases"<sup>1</sup> and shaped course for Scapa Flow. The return to harbour was uneventful.

Though it had apparently been part of the German's strategical scheme to have a quantity of submarines stationed off the British East Coast harbours to attack our fleet on coming out to battle, and on the return after action, no large scale attack was made. A few British ships, chiefly destroyers, had torpedoes fired at them when approaching the English and Scottish harbours, and one or two ships on their passage across the North Sea were also attacked by submarines, but the intensity of these attacks was no more than was customary to the fleet when steaming in the North Sea, and they were not successful.

A more important factor in the experience of most ships was the bad weather which sprung up early on June 1st. Struggling back across the North Sea on June 1st, June 2nd, and even on June 3rd, there were half-a-dozen or more crippled British ships, some in the tow of another ship or some in tow of another cripple—"Onslow" and "Defender," for example—almost all with their wireless shot away, their navigational appliances gone, and for many their seaworthiness dangerously impaired by the damages received in action. "Marlborough," "Warspite," "Southampton," "Broke," "Spitfire," "Onslaught," these and a number of other damaged ships were struggling back, some at no more than 4 or 5 knots speed, or some even, as was the "Broke" on account of her bows being smashed up, forced to turn

<sup>1</sup> Lord Jellicoe's "Grand Fleet," 1914-16.





"GREAT SMEARS OF OIL AND WRECKAGE."





stern to sea and making back on June 2nd towards the coast of Germany, before the dying down of the gale allowed her to make good some ground on a westerly course.

The narrative of H.M.S. "Spitfire" typically describes the anxieties of the damaged ships struggling across the 300 miles from the Jutland bank to the English coast:—

"Mess tables, collision mats, and shores were used to try and fill up the gaping bow—but they were all washed inboard again, time after time, as the wind and sea were now fast rising.

"By dawn—June 1st—the sea had risen a good deal, and the wind was still freshening from the south-west, and about 8.0 a.m. we had to turn the ship head to sea and ease down. All the store-rooms, shell-rooms, and lower mess decks forward being flooded, we began to get very anxious whether the fore boiler-room bulkhead would stand the strain. The Captain ordered a tot of rum to be served out all round at dawn, and I must say that cheered up the men no end. Luckily the galley was not damaged, and we all got some food, the men there, and the officers in the after canopy round the wheel. . . .

"Two guns' crews were organised and kept manned in case of meeting anyone, but except for one Norwegian merchant ship, we met no one.

"In the dog watches the sea got up and the wind increased so considerably that we had to turn to about north to keep the sea on our quarter.

"Our hopes of getting home again fell during that night (June 1st-2nd), as the weather gradually became worse and worse, and about 1.0 a.m. we decided the only thing to do was to fire distress signals, estimating that we were about 60 miles from the English, or it might be the Scottish coast.

"But about 2.0 a.m.—it seemed like a miracle—the wind suddenly died down and the sea got smoother and smoother, until at 4.30 a.m. we turned to west-south-west, and increased speed to about 10 knots.

"As the morning drew on we met a patrol drifter, which informed us we were 22 miles E.N.E. of the Tyne. . . . We entered the Tyne and berthed at Jarrow by the 'Bonaventure,' whose officers and men showed us all the greatest kindness. They sent a party over to tidy up our ship, and our entire ship's company went over to her for baths and a good square meal. We were all very glad of both. . . ."

All across the North Sea on the morning of June 1st were being committed to the deep the bodies of those who had given their lives in the fight—committed to the deep wrapped in their hammocks in the traditional manner of the seaman, as Sir Francis Drake was laid to rest three hundred years ago.

"Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,  
(Capt'en art tha' sleeping there below?)  
Slung 'atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,  
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe."

*But of the 6,000 men who died at Jutland more than half already lay on the Jutland banks around the wreck of a ship they had manned. They had been buried "in one great cloud of flame and smoke," during the fight.*

*"We have fed our sea for a thousand years,  
And she calls us, still unfed,  
For that is our doom and pride."*







BATTLE CRUISER FORCE MOORED IN FIRTH OF FORTH IMMEDIATELY  
AFTER ARRIVAL.

[To face page 216.]



## Message from His Majesty the King

Sent to the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet in reply to a message of "humble duty and respectful and heartfelt wishes on His Majesty's Birthday,"  
✱ ✱ ✱ telegraphed on June 3rd, 1916. ✱ ✱ ✱

*"I am deeply touched by the message which you have sent me on behalf of the Grand Fleet. It reaches me on the morrow of a battle which has once more displayed the splendid gallantry of the officers and men under your Command.*

*"I mourn the loss of brave men, many of them personal friends of my own, who have fallen in their country's cause. Yet even more do I regret that the German High Seas Fleet, in spite of its heavy losses, was enabled by the misty weather to evade the full consequences of an encounter they have always professed to desire, but for which when the opportunity arrived they showed no inclination.*

*"Though the retirement of the enemy immediately after the opening of the general engagement robbed us of the opportunity of gaining a decisive victory, the events of last Wednesday amply justify my confidence in the valour and efficiency of the fleets under your command.*

*"GEORGE, R.I."*



## APPENDIX "A."

### The British Casualties, 31st May to 1st June, 1916.

SHIP.	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		PRISONERS OF WAR.		REMARKS.
	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	
H.M.S. "ACASTA," - - -	1	5	...	1	...	...	
" " "ARDENT" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	4	74	1	1	...	...	
" " "BARHAM," - - -	4	22	1	36	...	...	
" " "BLACK PRINCE" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	37	820	...	...	...	...	Includes 5 civilians.
" " "BROKE," - - -	1	46	3	33	...	...	
" " "CALLIOPE," - - -	...	10	2	7	...	...	
" " "CASTOR," - - -	...	13	1	22	...	...	
" " "CHESTER," - - -	2	33	3	39	...	...	
" " "COLOSSUS," - - -	...	...	...	5	...	...	
" " "DEFENCE" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	54	849	...	...	...	...	Includes 4 civilians.
" " "DEFENDER," - - -	...	1	...	2	...	...	
" " "DUBLIN," - - -	1	2	...	24	...	...	
" " "FORTUNE" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	4	63	...	1	...	...	
" " "INDEFATIGABLE" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	57	960	...	...	...	2	Includes 5 civilians.
" " "INVINCIBLE" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	61	965	...	...	...	...	Includes 5 civilians.
" " "LION," - - -	6	93	...	43	...	...	Includes 2 civilians.
" " "MALAYA," - - -	2	61	...	33	...	...	Includes 4 civilians.
" " "MARLBOROUGH," - - -	...	2	...	...	...	...	
" " "MOORSOM," - - -	...	...	...	1	...	...	
" " "NESSUS," - - -	2	5	...	7	...	...	
" " "NESTOR" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	2	5	...	...	5	74	
" " "NOMAD" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	1	7	...	...	4	68	
" " "ONSLAUGHT," - - -	3	2	...	2	...	...	
" " "ON SLOW," - - -	...	2	...	3	...	...	
" " "PETARD," - - -	2	7	1	5	...	...	
" " "PORPOISE," - - -	...	2	...	2	...	...	
" " "PRINCESS ROYAL," - - -	...	22	1	77	...	...	Includes 2 civilians.
" " "QUEEN MARY" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	57	1209	2	5	1	1	Includes 5 civilians.
" " "SHARK" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	7	79	...	2	...	...	
" " "SOUTHAMPTON," - - -	...	35	1	40	...	...	Includes 1 civilian.
" " "SPARROWHAWK" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	...	6	...	...	...	...	
" " "SPITFIRE," - - -	...	6	3	16	...	...	
" " "TIGER," - - -	2	22	...	37	...	...	
" " "TIPPERARY" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	11	174	...	2	...	8	
" " "TURBULENT" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	5	85	...	...	...	13	
" " "VALIANT," - - -	...	...	...	1	...	...	
" " "WARRIOR" ( <i>sunk</i> ), - - -	1	70	2	25	...	...	{ Casualties sustained prior to the loss of the ship. Includes 3 civilians.
" " "WARSPITE," - - -	1	13	3	13	...	...	
Totals, - - -	328	5671	25	485	10	166	

Grand total, 363 Officers + 6322 Men = 6685.<sup>1</sup>

*Note.*—The British casualties at Trafalgar, 21st October, 1805, totalled 1663 killed and wounded.

## APPENDIX "B."

### Brief Explanation of the Course of the Battle.<sup>1</sup>

At 2.30 p.m. on 31st May, 1916, a British battle cruiser force from Rosyth was at sea in the Heligoland Bight, about 200 miles north of the German coast. The force was under the command of Sir David Beatty. Sir John Jellicoe, with the main British battle fleet from Scapa Flow was in support of the Rosyth force, roughly 60 miles to the northward.

Unexpectedly, at 2.30 p.m., one of the Rosyth light cruisers reported enemy ships in sight, and Sir David Beatty steered to intercept them. After an hour and a quarter's steaming, 5 German battle cruisers were sighted, and at 3.48 p.m. Beatty's 6 battle cruisers opened fire at a range of 18,500 yards—10½ land miles. The Germans were to the eastward of the British battle cruisers, and both forces steamed to the south at high speed, fighting a fierce gunnery duel. At 4.4 p.m. H.M.S. *Indefatigable* blew up and sank. At 4.26 p.m. H.M.S. *Queen Mary* blew up, but the four remaining British battle cruisers continued the action with the five German ships. The range varied from 6½ to 9 miles.

Ten minutes later (4.37) a large force of German battleships was sighted coming up from the southward, and at 4.45 p.m. Sir David Beatty turned right about, to the northward, and was imitated a few minutes later by the German battle cruisers. The duel was then continued on a northerly course. At about the same time the 5th Battle Squadron, four powerful ships of the *Queen Elizabeth* class which had been following the battle at their utmost speed, formed up 2 miles to the southward of the battle cruisers and engaged the van of the German battle fleet and the rear German battle cruisers.

Sir John Jellicoe at 5.0 p.m. was now about 40 miles to the northward of the action, steaming at full speed to the southward with his 24 Dreadnought battleships, in the hope of joining the battle. Admiral Von Scheer, the German Commander-in-Chief, with 22 German battleships,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This account is not authoritative but it is hoped that it is sufficiently accurate to indicate truly the main course of the battle. Von Scheer's book, "The High Seas Fleet," Lord Jellicoe's book, "The Grand Fleet, 1914-16," and the Jutland Despatches, together with the narratives of eye-witnesses are the principal authorities used.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly only 21 Battleships, but probably 22:—16 Dreadnoughts and 6 pre-Dreadnoughts. The relative Forces therefore were:—

Germans,	-	-	22 Battleships; 5 Battle Cruisers.
British,	-	-	28 Battleships; 9 (reduced by 5.0 p.m. to 7) Battle Cruisers.

Information of the Light Forces present is less certain, but probably was, very approximately:—

Germans,	-	-	11 Light Cruisers; about 70 Destroyers.
British,	-	-	33 Cruisers or Light Cruisers; about 80 Destroyers.

## Appendix "B."—Explanation of the Course of the Battle.

was 10 miles south of our battle cruisers, and was pursuing to the north, to keep in support of his own battle cruisers and to finish off any damaged British ships that might drop astern out of the action.

The battle-cruiser duel, with the 5th B.S. fighting the van of the German battle fleet, continued from 5.0 to 6.0 p.m. on a northerly course, periods of calm being alternated with periods of fierce fighting. No British or German ships were sunk during this hour, but several capital ships on both sides received severe damage from shell-fire.

### The British Battle Fleet Arrives.

A few minutes before 6.0 p.m. Sir David Beatty's battle cruisers made junction with the leading ships of the British battle fleet. Sir David Beatty turned sharply to the eastward, was joined by three more battle cruisers detached from the Grand Fleet, and forced the five German battle cruisers to turn away to the south-eastward. At 6.33 p.m. one of the reinforcing British battle cruisers, H.M.S. *Invincible*, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Hood, was hit in a turret, the magazine blew up, and she sank.

At 6.15 p.m. Sir John Jellicoe, in the battleship *Iron Duke*, sighted the leading ships of the German battle fleet, and deployed his battle fleet from cruising formation into battle line.<sup>1</sup> Their immediate course was roughly north-east, altering round to south-east, one ship following in the wake of her next ahead. They opened fire as they deployed, the enemy battle line bearing roughly south of them.

The British battle fleet from 6.0 to 6.30 p.m. formed a curved line like the outer side of a crescent, and were firing at the German battle fleet, disposed in an irregular or in a curved line on the inside of the crescent.

The rear of our line was nearer to the enemy than were the van, but at no time was more than a portion of the German battle fleet visible to any one part of our battle line, and for most of the action three or four big ships, or occasionally five or six, was the maximum number in sight. It is probable that the Germans similarly were able to see only a fraction of our battle line at any one moment.

At 7.0 p.m. the British fleet turned together to south to close the range, and re-formed into single line on this course.

Apparently the German battle fleet turned 16 points to starboard at 6.35 p.m. and retreated to the westward, until at 6.55 p.m. the German Commander-in-Chief decided "to advance regardless of consequences, and "to bring all the destroyers to the attack." At 6.55 he altered course to east.

Between 7.0 and 7.30 p.m. torpedo attacks were launched by German destroyer flotillas, and the British battle fleet altered course away from the enemy to avoid the torpedoes. The two principal attacks appear

<sup>1</sup> To deploy means to alter from a closed up cruising formation into a single line or other open formation in which all guns can be brought to bear on the enemy.



## Appendix "B."—Explanation of the Course of the Battle.

to have been launched at 7.10 and 7.25 p.m., but in addition individual German ships probably fired torpedoes from the vicinity of their battle line at any time from 6.15 p.m. onwards. H.M.S. *Marlborough*, flagship of the 1st Battle Squadron, was hit by a torpedo at 6.54 p.m., but held her place in the line until after dark.

During the "advance" of the German fleet at 6.55 p.m. onwards, the British battle fleet lay to the eastward of them and was stretched approximately at right angles across their track in the manner usually called "crossing the T." The British fire, as far as visibility permitted, was concentrated on the German 3rd Squadron which led their line.

About 7.15 the German flotillas laid a heavy smoke screen between their fleet and the British "to protect the van of the main fleet, which "was being severely pressed." Under cover of this smoke screen the German battle fleet was turned away to a westerly course at 7.17, and then altered in succession to south-west, south and finally south-east. The German 2nd Battle Squadron was separated from the 1st and 3rd Battle Squadrons during most of the battle fleet action. The battle cruiser and light cruiser squadrons were in a confused state.

By 8.0 p.m. the British fleet had lost touch with the German fleet and firing had died down. By 9.0 p.m. all firing finally ceased, the day action was ended, and both battle fleets were left practically intact. The British fleet was to the south-eastward of the Germans, between them and their bases.

### The Night Action.

At 10 p.m. night fighting commenced. It was a still but cloudy night, very dark. The German fleet steered to the south-eastward, *en route* for a lightship called Horn Reefs, which marked one of the two mine-swept passages to the German harbours.<sup>1</sup> Sir John Jellicoe ordered a mine-layer to lay mines near to the light vessel, and himself steered with all his fleet to the southward at 17 knots to make ground towards Heligoland, so as to deny the enemy the other swept passage to Germany, and to place himself in such a position that he might bring the enemy to action at daylight.

The British destroyer flotillas were stationed astern of the battle columns to guard the rear from night torpedo attacks. Between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. the German fleet steered across the path of the British flotillas, were attacked with torpedoes, and one or perhaps two German battleships were sunk. Also, two or three German light cruisers and one destroyer were sunk. Five British destroyers were lost during these attacks. The British battle fleet, being 5 to 10 miles to the southward, ahead of the destroyer flotillas, did not encounter any enemy ships during the night,

<sup>1</sup> There was another swept passage which ran along the northern German coast, by the Friesian Islands, and gave exit to the west or north-westward, but as it was nearly 150 miles distant from the battle it need hardly be taken into account.

## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

but they continuously saw astern of them the gun-flashes, searchlights, and explosions of the flotillas in action.

At dawn on June 1st, at 2.47 a.m., the British battle fleet turned to the north, and swept up and down until past noon seeking for the German fleet. But the Germans had all passed through or passed across the rear of the British fleet before 2.30 a.m.,<sup>1</sup> had some of them gone across the British mine-field by Horn Reefs, but had lost only one ship in doing so,<sup>2</sup> and were now steaming down the coast of Schleswig Holstein in safety behind their own mine-fields, towards the final security of their harbours. They were sighted by British surface ships only once again before they came to surrender themselves off Rosyth 2½ years later.

The British battle fleet returned to Scapa Flow on the afternoon of June 1st, and Beatty's battle cruisers returned to Rosyth.

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### APPENDIX "C."

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## Chronology of Principal Events.

(Note.—These times are not based upon authentic records, but are taken from the Jutland despatches, checked with narratives, Jellicoe's "Grand Fleet," 1914-1916, and Von Scheer's "High Seas Fleet.")

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PHASE I.—Battle Cruiser Action,	.	Roughly 4.0 to 6.0 p.m.
PHASE II.—Battle Fleet Action,	.	Roughly 6.0 to 9.0 p.m.
PHASE III.—Night Action,	.	Roughly 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., June 1st.

---

2.20 p.m. *Galatea* reports enemy ships in sight.

Rosyth battle cruiser force steer to intercept enemy.

2.40 p.m. Grand Fleet raise steam for full speed and prepare to join Rosyth Force.

3.8 p.m. *Engadine's* Seaplane is hoisted out and commences reconnaissance flight.

3.25 p.m. Rosyth battle cruisers sight 5 enemy battle cruisers bearing north-east. Range, 23,000 yards (11½ sea miles). Course, E.S.E.

<sup>1</sup> Accurate information of the German positions is not yet public, but according to his own book the German C.-in-C. passed Horn Reef L.V. at 3 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly she was only damaged; accurate intelligence is not yet public. It is stated that the ship was the battleship "Ostfriesland."

## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

- 3.25 p.m. 13th Destroyer Flotilla takes station ahead of battle cruisers, near to 2nd L.C.S.; 1st and 3rd L.C.S. are astern—*i.e.*, to the northward of battle cruisers. 5th Battle Squadron (4 ships *Queen Elizabeth* class) are about 5 miles astern of battle cruisers.
- 3.48 p.m. *Lion* opens fire. *Princess Royal*, *Queen Mary*, *Tiger*, *New Zealand*, *Indefatigable*, following astern in single line, also open fire.
- 4.4 p.m. *Indefatigable* sunk.
- 4.8 p.m. 5th B.S. open fire; range 20,000 yards (a very long range).
- 4.26 p.m. *Queen Mary* sunk.
- About 4.15 to 5 p.m. 13th Destroyer Flotilla attack enemy battle cruisers with torpedoes, engage enemy destroyers with gunfire, and eventually attack enemy battle fleet.  
*Nestor* and *Nomad* sunk. Two German destroyers sunk.
- 4.38 p.m. 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron (*Southampton*, *Nottingham*, *Birmingham*, *Dublin*) ahead of *Lion*, report enemy battle fleet in sight.
- 4.46 p.m. Rosyth battle cruisers alter course 16 points to starboard in succession on to northerly course.
- 4.52 p.m. German battle cruisers alter course 16 points to port (outwards) in succession on to northerly course.
- 4.57 p.m. 5th Battle Squadron pass our battle cruisers, then turn 16 points, and form up about 2 miles astern—*i.e.*, to the southward of them. Course North. They engage van of German battle fleet.
- 5.0 p.m. Grand Fleet is approximately 40 miles north-north-west (true) from H.M.S. *Lion*.
- 5.0 to 6.0 p.m. Four remaining battle cruisers—*Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Tiger*, *New Zealand*—continue gunnery duel with 5 German battle cruisers on a northerly course, range about 13,000 to 18,000 yards. There are intervals during which fire is checked; enemy are periodically obscured by mist.  
5th B.S. engage German battle cruisers and van of German battle fleet.
- About 5.30 p.m. Hood's battle cruiser squadron (*Invincible*, *Inflexible*, *Indomitable*), having been detached from Grand Fleet at 2.30 p.m. to support Rosyth battle cruiser force, sight gun-flashes.
- About 5.40 p.m. Light cruiser *Chester* engages enemy light cruisers, and soon afterwards other ships under Admiral Hood come into action.
- 5.59 p.m. *Shark* sunk.



## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

### About 6.0 to 9.0 p.m. BATTLE FLEET ACTION.

- About 5.50 p.m. Arbuthnot's Cruiser Squadron, *Defence*, etc., commence action with German light cruiser.
- 5.56 p.m. *Marlborough*, western wing battleship of Grand Fleet, sights *Lion*.
- About 5.55 to 6.25 p.m. Windy Corner period.
- 6.5 p.m. *Onslow* attacks German light cruiser, then battle cruisers, then battle fleet. Is damaged, and about 7.15 p.m. is towed out of action by *Defender*.
- 6.14 p.m. Battle Fleet deploys. Immediate course as they deploy E.N.E., ships then altering course in succession to S.E. by E. *King George V.* leading 2nd B.S. in the van; *Iron Duke* with 4th B.S. in the centre; *Marlborough* with 1st B.S. in the rear. 5th B.S. form astern of 1st B.S.
- 6.16 p.m. *Defence* blown up, *Warrior* disabled.
- 6.17 p.m. Battle fleet opens fire, 1st B.S. in the rear commencing. German light cruiser *Wiesbaden* set on fire, sinks soon afterwards.
- 6.20 p.m. *Warspite's* helm jams.
- 6.21 p.m. Hood's battle cruisers form ahead of *Lion* and engage enemy battle cruisers at about 8,000 yards range.
- 6.25 p.m. 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron (*Falmouth*, etc.) attack enemy battle cruisers.
- 6.30 to 7.20 p.m. Battleships in the centre and van firing at enemy.
- 6.33 p.m. *Invincible* blows up.
- 6.38 p.m. Battle fleet deployment complete; fleet in single line ahead steering S.E. by E.
- 6.47 p.m. *Acasta*, lying disabled, is passed by *Iron Duke* and the battle fleet.
- 6.54 p.m. *Marlborough* (4th battleship from the rear) hit by a torpedo.
- 7.0 to 7.14 p.m. Six British battle cruisers in van, hauling round through south to a south-westerly course, regain contact with enemy, which had been lost; range, 15,000 yards. British battle cruisers are roughly 5 to 7 miles ahead of leading battleship.
- 7.10 p.m. 1st German destroyer attack on battle fleet.
- 7.0 to 7.40 p.m. Course of battle fleet south, with periodical alterations to the eastward to neutralise torpedo attacks.
- 7.12 p.m. Rear ships of battle fleet (*Colossus*, *Neptune*, etc.) engage enemy battleships or battle cruisers.

## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

- About 7.20 p.m. Rear ships of battle fleet dodging torpedoes.
- About 7.25 p.m. Second German destroyer attack. German battle line makes large turn away under cover of this attack and of smoke screen. Probably two German destroyers sunk.
- 7.45 p.m. *Obedient*, *Marvel*, *Mindful*, and *Onslaught* sink a German destroyer, flying a Commodore's pendant, that lay damaged between the fleets.
- 7.45 p.m. Battle cruisers lose touch with enemy.
- About 8.20 p.m. 1st and 3rd L.C.S. locate head of enemy's line again. Battle cruisers on a westerly course regain touch. Enemy appear to suffer heavily from gunfire.
- 8.22 p.m. 4th Light Cruiser Squadron (*Calliope*, etc.) engaging enemy.
- 9.5 p.m. *Caroline* fires torpedoes at enemy battle cruisers.
- 9.0 p.m. Battle fleet course south; speed, 17 knots; take up night dispositions.
- Day action finished.
- 9.32 p.m. *Abdiel* detached to lay mine-field off Horn Reefs. Lays mines about 1.0 a.m.

### 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. NIGHT ACTION.

- 10.4 p.m. H.M.S. *Castor* and part of 11th Destroyer Flotilla in action (*Castor's* 1st Night Action).
- 10.20 p.m. Light cruiser action of 2nd L.C.S. (*Southampton*, *Dublin*, *Nottingham*, *Birmingham*) with German light cruisers. German light cruiser *Frauenlob* sunk by torpedo from *Southampton*.
- About 11.30 p.m. Actions of *Tipperary's* (4th) Flotilla commence.<sup>1</sup>
- 11.30 p.m. Rough chronology was:—
- About 11.30 p.m.; 4th Flotilla in action at close range with German cruisers. *Tipperary* is set on fire. *Spitfire* is damaged.
- About 11.45 p.m.; *Ardent*, *Ambuscade*, *Garland*, and *Fortune* engage enemy big ship; *Fortune* is sunk.
- About 11.30 p.m. *Spitfire* closing the burning *Tipperary* is rammed by a German cruiser.
- Soon after Midnight. Burning ship, possibly H.M.S. *Black Prince*, passes close by *Spitfire*.

<sup>1</sup> It is probable that during these actions one or more German cruisers or battleships were sunk by torpedoes, but there is not sufficient evidence upon which to base a definite statement.

## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

- About 12.15 p.m.<sup>1</sup> *Broke*, followed by *Sparrowhawk* and others,  
in action with German battleship.  
*Broke* collides with *Sparrowhawk*.
- Soon after *Ardent* sunk by German battleships.
- Midnight.
- About 2 a.m. *Tipperary* sinks. Survivors take to rafts.
- About 3 a.m. *Sparrowhawk* sights German light cruiser.  
German light cruiser sinks.
- About 4 a.m. *Garland* and *Contest* engage four German  
destroyers.
- About 5.0 a.m. Survivors of *Tipperary* on a raft reach  
H.M.S. *Sparrowhawk*.
- 8.0 a.m. H.M.S. *Sparrowhawk* is sunk. Her crew  
with survivors of *Tipperary* are taken  
on board H.M.S. *Marksman*.
- 12.15 a.m. H.M.S. *Castor's* 2nd night action (one German destroyer  
probably sunk).
- 12.30 (?) Part of 13th Destroyer Flotilla (*Petard*, *Nicator*, etc.) in action  
with German battleships.  
H.M.S. *Turbulent* rammed and sunk.
- Note*.—Sometime during the night or early morning  
H.M.S. *Black Prince* foundered.
- German battle cruiser *Lutzow* was abandoned and sank  
as result of damage received during day action. One  
German light cruiser, perhaps two, also sank during  
the night.
- June 1st.*
- 1.45 a.m. 12th Destroyer Flotilla (*Faulknor*, *Obedient*, etc.) sight enemy  
battle squadron. Manœuvre into position of torpedo  
advantage.
- 2.0 a.m. Attack. One German battleship hit by torpedo and sunk.  
H.M.S. *Onslaught* damaged, but no British ship lost.
- 2.25 a.m. H.M.S. *Maenad* turns back and delivers a second attack by  
herself. Probably one of her torpedoes hit.
- 2.30 a.m. Vice-Admiral Sir C. Burney, Commanding 1st Battle Squadron,  
transfers his flag from *Marlborough* to *Revenge*. *Marl-*  
*borough* proceeds to England.
- 2.47 a.m. Grand Fleet Battle Squadrons, accompanied by cruisers and  
a few destroyers, turn to north. German battle fleet at  
this time was passing or past Horn Reefs, which bore  
roughly north-east 40 miles from *Iron Duke*.

<sup>1</sup> Available evidence is conflicting as to whether the time of this action was just before midnight or just after.



## Appendix "C."—Chronology of Principal Events.

- 3.0 to 6.30 a.m. Several cruisers or destroyers sight enemy light craft disappearing in the mist. No action is fought.
- 3.30 to 4.0 a.m. Zeppelin in sight from various British ships.
- 7.30 a.m. H.M.S. *Warrior* abandoned. *Engadine* takes off crew.
- 1.15 p.m. British Battle Fleet shapes course for Scapa Flow.
- June 1st. Damaged Ships proceeding Home Independently—
- BATTLESHIPS.
- H.M.S. *Marlborough*.
- H.M.S. *Warspite*.
- DESTROYERS.
- H.M.S. *Onslow* in tow of H.M.S. *Defender*.
- H.M.S. *Acasta* in tow of H.M.S. *Nonsuch*.
- H.M.S. *Broke*.
- H.M.S. *Spitfire*.
- H.M.S. *Garland*, with H.M.S. *Contest* and H.M.S. *Porpoise*.
- H.M.S. *Onslaught*.
- German battle cruiser *Seydlitz* very badly damaged in the day action, reaches Cuxhaven, but (it is believed) sinks or is purposely grounded at the entrance. She is later salved.
- German battleship *Ostfriesland* (?) strikes a mine in the vicinity of Horn Reefs.
- June 2nd.
- 8.0 a.m. H.M.S. *Marlborough* arrives safely in the Humber.
- Forenoon. Battle fleet returns to Scapa Flow.
- 9.45 p.m. Battle fleet refuelled and reported ready for sea.
- June 3rd.
- About 8.0 p.m. *Broke* enters the Tyne. All damaged British ships now back in harbour.

## APPENDIX "D."

# Summary of Strength and Losses of the two Fleets.



## STRENGTH.

<u>BRITISH.</u>	<u>GERMAN.</u>
28 Battleships.	22 Battleships.
9 Battle Cruisers.	5 Battle Cruisers.
33 Cruisers and Light Cruisers.	11 Light Cruisers.
1 Seaplane Carrier.	About 72 Destroyers.
1 Minelayer.	
79 Destroyers.	

## LOSSES.

(British losses are known ; German losses are estimated only but probably are correct).

<u>BRITISH.</u>	<u>GERMAN.</u>
3 Battle Cruisers.	1 Battleship.
3 Cruisers.	1 Battle Cruiser.
8 Destroyers.	4 Light Cruisers.
	5 Destroyers.

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